Still Sick

1

AKASHI

TOKYOPOP®

Still Sick Volume 1
Akashi

Editor - Lena Atanassova
Marketing Associate - Kae Winters
Technology and Digital Media Assistant - Phillip Hong
Translator - Katie Kimura
Copy Editor - Massiel Gutierrez
QC - Daichi Nemoto
Graphic Designer - Phillip Hong
Retouching and Lettering - Vibrraant Publishing Studio
Editor-in-Chief & Publisher - Stu Levy

TOKYOPOP and are trademarks or registered trademarks of TOKYOPOP Inc.

TOKYOPOP
5200 W Century Blvd
Suite 705
Los Angeles, CA 90045 USA

E-mail: info@TOKYOPOP.com
Come visit us online at www.TOKYOPOP.com

www.facebook.com/TOKYOPOP
www.twitter.com/TOKYOPOP
www.pinterest.com/TOKYOPOP
www.instagram.com/TOKYOPOP

© 2019 TOKYOPOP
All Rights Reserved

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders. This manga is a work of fiction. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

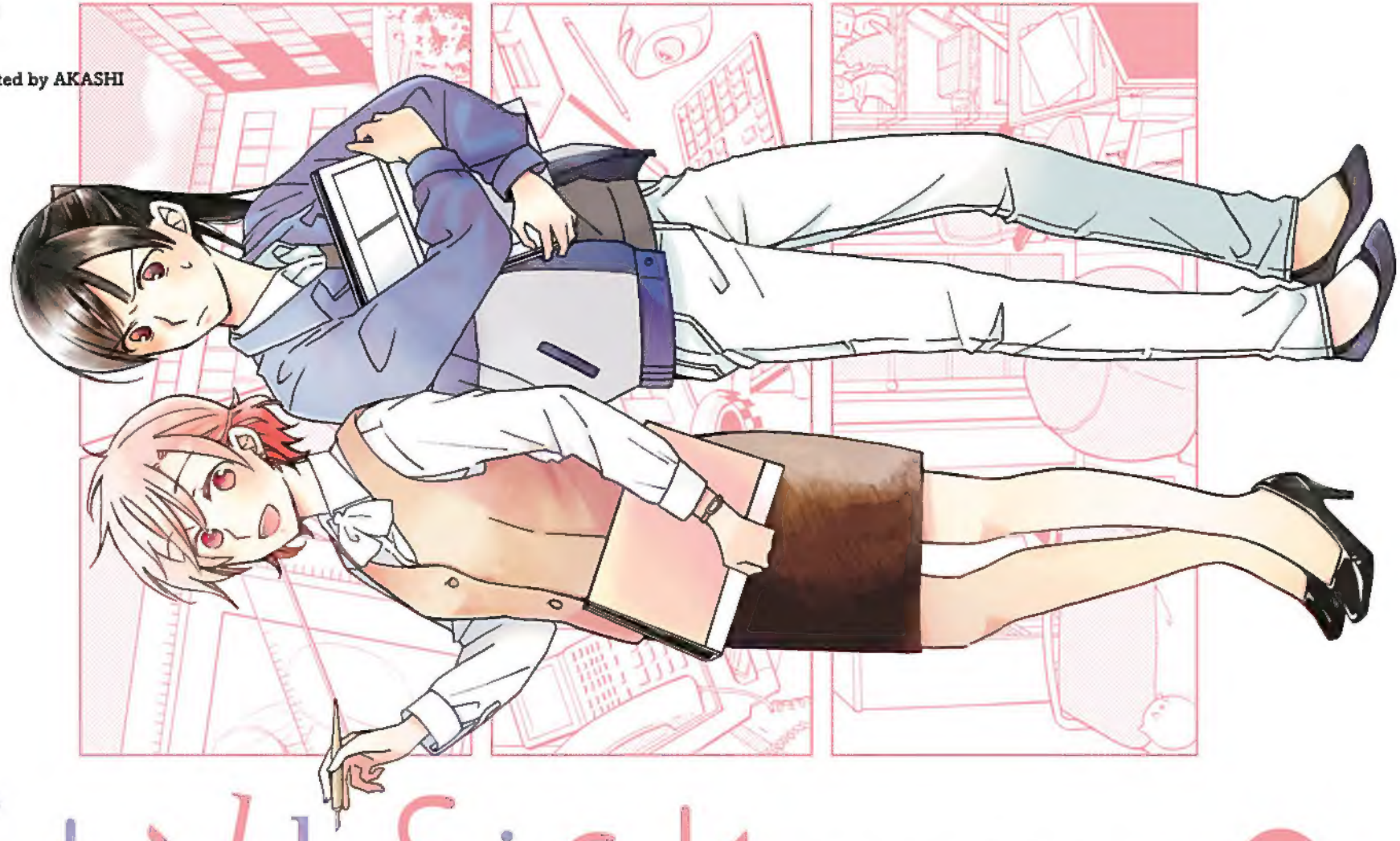
© 2018 Akashi
All Rights Reserved

First published in Japan in 2018 by MAG Garden Corporation
English translation rights arranged with MAG Garden Corporation through Tuttle-Mori Agency, Inc, Tokyo

PRINT: 978-1-4278-6208-2
EPUB: 978-1-4278-6345-4
MOBI: 978-1-4278-6346-1
PDF: 978-1-4278-6347-8

灯

Presented by AKASHI

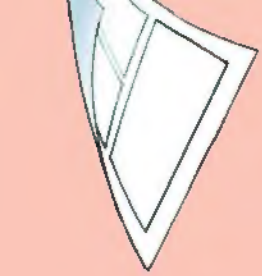


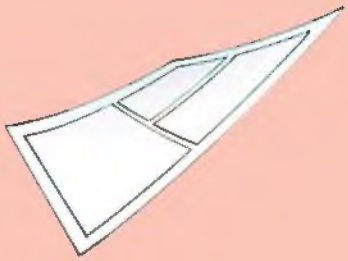
Still Sick

[ストレスフリー]

BLADE COMICS pixiv

一





[CONTENTS]

Chapter 1 003

Chapter 2 021

Chapter 3 045

Chapter 4 067

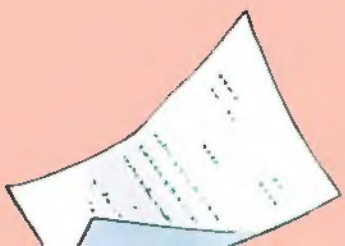
Chapter 5 093

Chapter 6 115

Chapter 7 137

\ Bonus Chapter! /

Special Edition 165



1 GIRL A X BEAUTY B
NICO NICO
BACKYARD

SHIMIZU-SAN...
B-14
B

I, MAKOTO SHIMIZU, 29-YEAR-OLD...
MA...
MAEKAWA-SAN...
WOW! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU CAN DRAW COMICS, SHIMIZU-SAN!

HAVE JUST HAD MY COWORKER FIND OUT...
HEY, SHIMIZU-SAN...

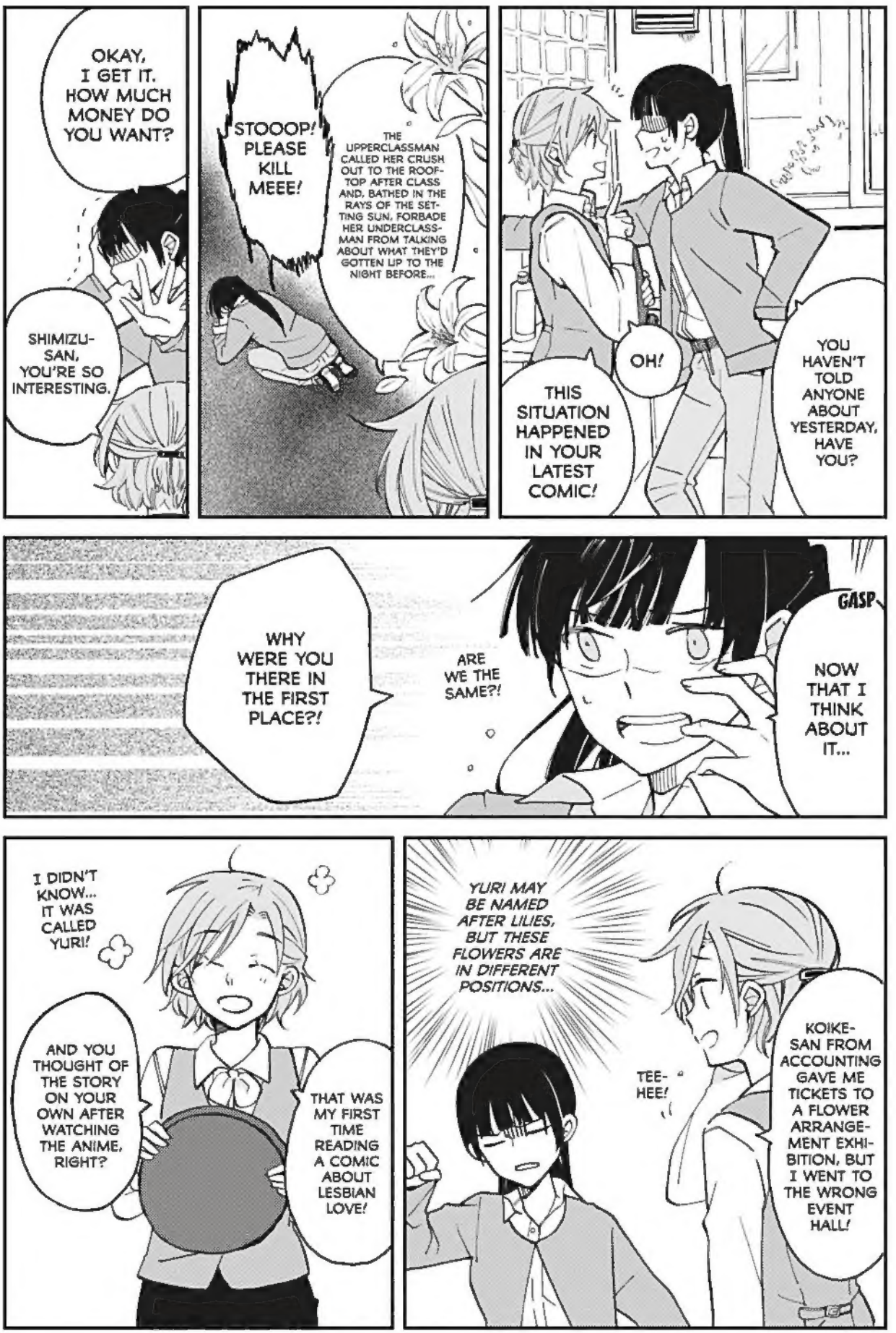
THAT I DRAW FAN COMICS.
WHAT'S "YURI"?

Chapter 1

GOOD MORNING!
IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS SINCE I STARTED WORKING AT THIS INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY FACTORY.
MORNING!
I'M THE TEAM LEADER OF THE R&D DEPARTMENT.
EVERY DAY IS BUSY, BUT WE CONTINUE TO MAKE PROGRESS.
OWWW!

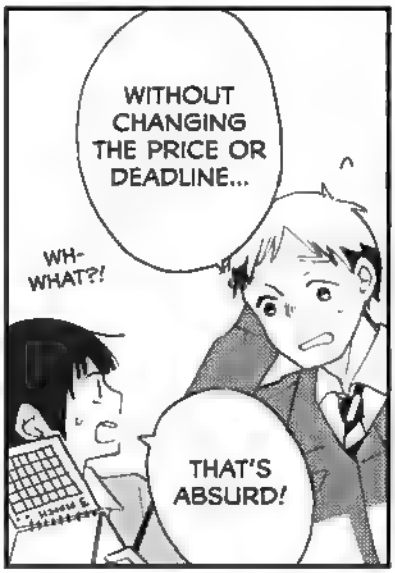
GOOD MORNING!

SMILE
ニコ
OH, DID YOU MEET MY TWIN SISTER–
GIGGLE
SHIMIZU-SAN, YOU'RE A BAD LIAR.
SMILE
ニコ!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
IT WAS GOOD SEEING YOU YESTERDAY.
MORNING, MAEKAWA-SAN.
WHAM
OH, DO YOU NOT LIKE COFFEE?
THAT'S NOT IT!
MAEKAWA-SAN, I'D LIKE TO TALK WITH YOU!


OKAY, I GET IT. HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU WANT?
SHIMIZU-SAN, YOU'RE SO INTERESTING.
STOOOP! PLEASE KILL MEEE!
THE UPPERCLASSMAN CALLED HER CRUSH OUT TO THE ROOFTOP AFTER CLASS AND, BATHED IN THE RAYS OF THE SETTING SUN, FORBADE HER UNDERCLASSMAN FROM TALKING ABOUT WHAT THEY'D GOTTEN UP TO THE NIGHT BEFORE...
THIS SITUATION HAPPENED IN YOUR LATEST COMIC!
OH!
YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ANYONE ABOUT YESTERDAY, HAVE YOU?
WHY WERE YOU THERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?!
ARE WE THE SAME?!
GASP
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...
I DIDN'T KNOW... IT WAS CALLED YURI!
AND YOU THOUGHT OF THE STORY ON YOUR OWN AFTER WATCHING THE ANIME, RIGHT?
THAT WAS MY FIRST TIME READING A COMIC ABOUT LESBIAN LOVE!
YURI MAY BE NAMED AFTER LILIES, BUT THESE FLOWERS ARE IN DIFFERENT POSITIONS...
TEE-HEE!
KOIKE-SAN FROM ACCOUNTING GAVE ME TICKETS TO A FLOWER ARRANGEMENT EXHIBITION, BUT I WENT TO THE WRONG EVENT HALL!

NO, WAIT! I CAN'T LET HER FOOL ME!
TURN
IN ANY CASE, KEEP THIS A SECRET! DON'T TELL ANYONE!
OH, REALLY?
THEN I'LL LEND YOU THE DVDS!
しぉ
BRIGHT
あっ
THE ORIG NAL ANIME INTERESTED ME-
OKAY!
I'VE ALWAYS HAD TO HIDE MY PREFERENCE FOR YURI.
I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO FIND SOMEONE WITH SIMILAR TASTES, EVEN AMONG MY OTAKU FRIENDS.
NO WAY!
HUH? YURI?
UNTIL NOW...
SHE'S WEIRD.

I'M ALWAYS SUSPICIOUS WHEN PEOPLE ACCEPT MY HOBBIES SO EASILY...
WE'VE NEVER EVEN TALKED MUCH UNTIL NOW...
WHAT IS SHE AFTER?


WITHOUT CHANGING THE PRICE OR DEADLINE...
WH-WHAT?!
THAT'S ABSURD!

THEY WANT TO CHANGE THE SPECI-FICATIONS?

SHIMIZU-SAN, I NEED SOME ADVICE...

ANOTHER TEST PLEASE!
ANOTHER CHANGE PLEASE!
GYAAAH!
DEADLINE
SQUEEZE
TWIRL
TWIRL
UGH, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO WORK OVERTIME, WHICH MEANS LESS TIME TO SPEND ON MY ZINES...

I'LL CHECK WITH SOMEONE IN THE MANUFACTURING DEPARTMENT, BUT I FEEL LIKE WE'LL NEED THEM TO PICK ONE OR THE OTHER.
OKAY.

I'M HEADING HOME!
TAP
TAP
I WANT TO START WORKING ON MY STORY-BOARD AS SOON AS I GET HOME.
AH!
YOU SURE WERE WORKING LATE!
I CAME TO BORROW THOSE DVDS.
HOW DO YOU KNOW WHERE I LIVE?
WHY ARE YOU HERE?!
THUMBS UP
I WORK IN GENERAL AFFAIRS, SO I LOOKED IT UP!
THAT'S AN ABUSE OF YOUR AUTHORITY!

HUH?
WAIT A BIT, PLEASE!
I'LL GO BUY SOME INGREDI-ENTS!
SHUT
YOU'RE JUST HAVING A RICE BALL FROM THE CONVE-NIENCE STORE FOR DINNER?
I DON'T WANT TO WASTE TIME COOKING.
TA-DA!
MAYBE SHE'S NOT AS BAD AS I THOUGHT.
I CAN'T...
STOP EATING!
AH!
I JUST PICKED WHATEVER WAS CHEAP.
YOU'RE SO NICE .. HOME-COOKED FOOD TASTES GREAT..
I'M GLAD.

PFPT
WOW! A REAL MANUSCRIPT!
WOW!
あば" PANIC ば"ば"
ば"
SO YOU USE THIS TO DRAW YOUR COMICS?
NO, THAT'S JUST A STORYBOARD! IT ONLY HAS THE SETTINGS FOR THE COMIC!
BE CAREFUL!
AH...
WOBBLE
"MY DARLING, PLEASE ACCEPT MY FEELINGS FOR YOU..."
GEH...
DON'T READ IT OUT LOOOOUD!
TREMBLE.

PWAP
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES, I'M SORRY.
FWUMP
GASP
WHOA... MAEKAWA-SAN...
BA-DUMP
HAS SUCH A CUTE FACE...
SHIMIZU-SAN?
BA-DUMP

LET'S STOP TALKING TO HER.
REALLY?
SHIMIZU IS THAT WAY, TOO?
DON'T YOU THINK...
URGH!
I'M NOT!
GRIT
I DON'T CARE ABOUT FLESH AND BLOOD WOMEN!
THUNK
OUCHIE!

A WOMAN MY AGE...
YOU'RE PROBABLY...
SHIMIZU-SA-
JUST GOING TO MAKE FUN OF ME.
STILL DEVOTING HERSELF TO DRAWING FAN COMICS...
THAT'S NOT TRUE.

I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING I'M THAT PASSIONATE ABOUT.
I'M JEALOUS.
I THINK IT'S WONDERFUL THAT YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU CAN DEVOTE YOURSELF TO.
I CAN TELL THAT YOU REALLY LIKE THEM!
I DON'T CARE THAT IT'S TWO GIRLS...
BUT I DO LIKE THE COMICS YOU DREW!
I'M CHEERING FOR YOU!
BE MORE CONFI-DENT!
MAEKAWA-SAN...

*WHILE 'ONEE-SAMA' DIRECTLY TRANSLATES TO 'OLDER SISTER,' IT IS ALSO WIDELY USED BY BOTTOMS IN YURI MANGA TOWARD THEIR TOP, WHERE IT DENOTES RESPECT RATHER THAN A FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIP

APRIL
OH, ANOTHER ONE?
"ANOTHER"?
IT ONLY HAPPENS ONCE A YEAR.
I DO FLOWER ARRANGEMENT AS A HOBBY.
AND I'M GOING TO BE PART OF AN EXHIBITION. WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME?
...HUH?

"YURI" IS MAINLY USED TO REFER TO ROMANTIC OR OTHERWISE CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TWO FEMALES, BUT IT CAN ALSO BE BROADLY USED TO REFER TO ANY KIND OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN.
BECAUSE THERE IS NO SET DEFINITION, PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY LIKE YURI HAVE A WIDE RANGE OF INTERPRETATIONS AND PREFERENCES.
IT'S BEST TO KEEP IN MIND THAT THESE DIFFERENCES EXIST. HOWEVER, I HOPE YOU CAN VIEW A NUMBER OF SERIES AND FIND THE YURI THAT SPEAKS TO YOU THE MOST.
RATHER THAN LEARN ABOUT IT, I THINK IT'S BEST TO GET YOU USED TO THE SUBJECT MATTER. TO BEGIN WITH, I'LL HAVE YOU READ MY RECOM-MENDATIONS.
SHIMIZU-SAN, HOW DO I GET TO THE HIDDEN STAGE?
PUSH THE BOX IN FRONT OF THE GOAL.
RECOMMENDATIONS
PUK
PUK
PUK
PUK

GOOD MORNING!
Chapter 2

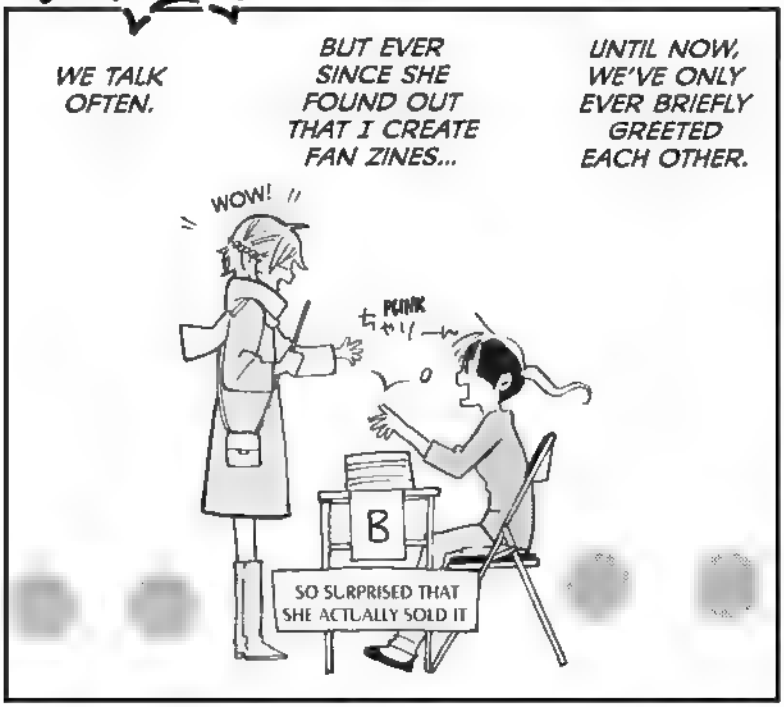
I WONDER IF SHE HAS A BOYFRIEND.
I'M SURE SHE DOES.
SHE'S NICE AND ALWAYS CHEERS EVERYONE UP.
TO-DO
NAME
MAEKAWA-SAN IS AS ENERGETIC AS ALWAYS.
GOOD MORNING!

GOOD MORNING, SHIMIZU-SAN!
GYAAAAH!
SLAM

MAEKAWA IS SO POPULAR!
I DON'T CARE ABOUT COMPANY LOVE RIVALRIES, BUT...
HEH
I KNEW SHE WOULD BE, THOUGH.

MORNING, MAEKAWA-SAN.
I WATCHED THE DVDS YOU LENT ME!
THEY WERE SO INTERESTING!
OH, BUT...
THE CHARACTERS DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE GIRLS IN YOUR LATEST ZINE-
AHHH!
WHACK

KEEP. YOUR. MOUTH. SHUT.
WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
IT'S OUR SECRET, ONEE-SAMA.
PEOPLE ARE WATCHING!
CUT IT OUT!


WE TALK OFTEN.
BUT EVER SINCE SHE FOUND OUT THAT I CREATE FAN ZINES...
UNTIL NOW, WE'VE ONLY EVER BRIEFLY GREETED EACH OTHER.
WOW!
PLINK
B
SO SURPRISED THAT SHE ACTUALLY SOLD IT

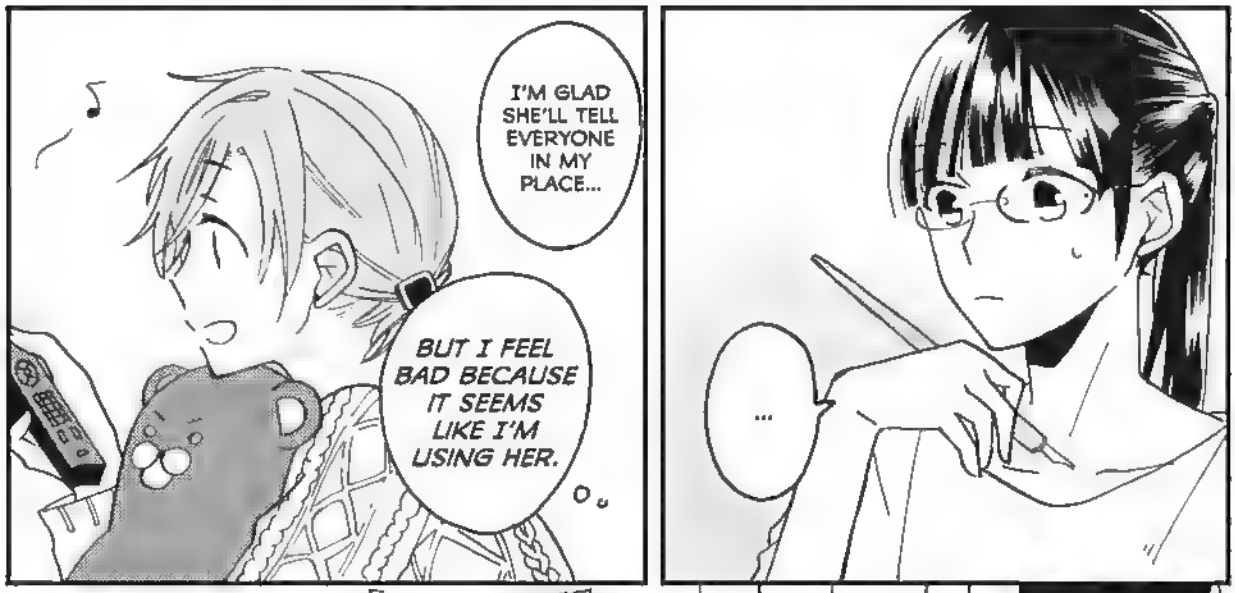
AKANE MAEKAWA.
THIS IS HER 3RD YEAR AT THE COMPANY.

IT WASN'T ON THE SAME DAY AS THE COMIC CONVENTION.
THIS.
FLOWER ARRANGEMENT EXHIBITION
OH!
!
SHIMIZU, CAN I HAVE A MOMENT?
OH, SURE!
I CAN'T TRUST HER ONE BIT.
A HA HA!
I MUST HAVE GOTTEN THE DATE WRONG!

A PARTY TO UNITE THE SALES AND R&D DEPARTMENTS?
KIDOGUCHI FROM SALES
RECENTLY THE DEPARTMENTS HAVEN'T BEEN GETTING ALONG.
YOU JUST WANT AN EXCUSE TO GO DRINKING, DON'T YOU? I'LL PASS.
TOMORUKO
THIS IS AN ORDER FROM YOUR BOSS.
WHICH IS WHY YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF GETTING THE R&D WORKERS TO GO.
NO WAY. YOU DO ALL OF IT.
UGH, YOU ARE SO...
CLOSE FRIENDS
CAN'T YOU GROW UP AND START SPENDING MORE TIME WITH PEOPLE?
BE QUIET. I DON'T NEED ADVICE FROM YOU.
OTAKU ARE BUSY PEOPLE.
I'LL ROUND EVERYONE UP, BUT CAN YOU AT LEAST GET THE WORD OUT...
GENERAL AFFAIRS?
TO GENERAL AFFAIRS?
はぁ SIGH
I GUESS THERE'S NO HELPING IT.

ISN'T MAEKAWA-CHAN SO CUTE?
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
GASP
BUT WHY?
DING
YOU'RE CLOSE WITH MAEKAWA, RIGHT? GET HER TO SPREAD THE WORD.
CLOSE?
HUH? WELL...
SCHEDULE
9:00 AM DEPARTMENT MTG
WELL, MAEKAWA IS CUTE.
I'M NOT GOING AFTER HER!
YEAH, LAST MONTH. WHY DO YOU ASK?
DIDN'T YOU BREAK UP WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND?
DING
DONG
A DRINKING PARTY?
...

YOU'RE GOING TOO, SHIMIZU-SAN?
I WAS TOLD TO INVITE EVERYONE IN GENERAL AFFAIRS.
OKAY! I'LL TELL THE OTHERS.
SMILE


I'M GLAD SHE'LL TELL EVERYONE IN MY PLACE...
BUT I FEEL BAD BECAUSE IT SEEMS LIKE I'M USING HER.
...

ちゃ DA-DAN!
SO...
WHY ARE YOU WATCHING THIS AT MY PLACE?
THERE WERE SOME THINGS I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.
PAUSE IT!
BEEP

LOOK! THEY'RE ON THE SAME SCREEN!
AND GIRL A AND BEAUTY B ARE EVEN LOOKING AT EACH OTHER!
BEAUTY B
GIRL A
THIS PASSIONATE GAZE MEANS...
THAT THEY HAVE OVERCOME THE ROLES OF UPPER- AND LOWERCLASSMEN! YES...
THEY ARE IN LOVE!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO UNDERSTAND.
...
?
YEH
I DON'T THINK YOU HAVE TO GO THAT FAR...
WE FAN ARTISTS ARE WRETCHED OUTCASTS WHO SHOULD BE PUNISHED FOR BENDING THE ORIGINAL WORK'S IDEAS TO OUR OWN WILLS...
STILL, WHEN I SENSE THE HIDDEN POTENTIAL IN EACH AND EVERY SECOND OF THE ORIGINAL SERIES' SUBTEXT...
INTENSE
INTENSE
MY IMAGINATION TAKES FLIGHT AND I FIND MYSELF SUSPENDED BY THE BELIEF IN MY HEADCANON...!

I WANT MY STORIES TO TAKE FORM SO THAT I CAN SHARE THEM WITH OTHERS!
I GET ALL FIRED UP AND FORGET ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT WAS BOTHERING ME.
I THINK IT'S WONDERFUL!
FLUSH
HA HA!
AH! YOU'RE MAKING FUN OF ME AGAIN!
NO, I'M NOT.

I REALIZED THAT MAEKAWA IS ALWAYS LAUGHING...
!
AT, THAT TIME...
BUT THAT THIS WAS HER TRUE SMILE.
BA-DUMP
SERIOUS.
HAH! AS IF!
SHIMIZU-SAN, PLEASE BE QUIET.
I DON'T CARE ABOUT FLESH AND BLOOD WOMEN!
WHA...
BA-DUMP
WHAT IS THIS SQUEEZING FEELING IN MY CHEST?
COULD I HAVE FEELINGS FOR...?

OPEN
CLACK
CHEERS!
CASE IN POINT: MY HAVING TO COME HERE AND DRINK WITH ALL OF YOU.
LIFE ISN'T ALWAYS FAIR.
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?
YOU'VE GOT A FOAM MUSTACHE.
GIGGLE
LAUGH
WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU'RE NOT AFTER HER? THAT'S A LIE IF I EVER HEARD ONE, KIDOGUCHI!!!!!
AH...
JOLT
GEH!
GULP
GULP
LIKE I CARE...
WHAT HAPPENS BETWEEN THEM!

IGNORE
IF IT'S JUST FOR TODAY...
FWAP
WHY I AM SULKING? WHAT AM I, A KID?
SHIMIZU-KUN...
DRINK UP!
ANOTHER SHOCHU ON THE ROCKS.
GREER
FWUMP
NOT BAD!
CLINK
ALCOHOL! IS! MY! FUEL!

4F
CHEER
LET'S GO FOR ANOTHER ROUND!
I'LL FORGET ALL ABOUT THIS!
THIS IS BAD.
I HAVEN'T BEEN GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP, SO THE ALCOHOL HIT HARDER THAN I EXPECTED.
UH...
DO YOU WANT TO GO WITH US?
YANK
OKA-
EXCUSE ME!
SHIMIZU-KUN, DON'T YOU WANT TO DRINK MORE? LET'S GO!

WE'RE GOING HOME!
HUH?
SURE.
CAN YOU DROP US OFF NEAR CITY HALL?
PUSHED INSIDE.
HEY!
SLAM
キッ
SQUEAK
AWWW, SO EARLY?
A HA HA, MAYBE NEXT TIME!
DASH

SHUT
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
YOU AND KIDOGUCHI SEEMED TO BE GETTING ALONG.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING...
ABOUT?!
OW!
SHOVE

I KNEW IT.
PANT
はぁ
YOU HAVE A FEVER.
ISN'T SHE ALWAYS LIKE THAT?
I HOPE SHE'S OKAY.
KIDOGUCHI-SAN TOLD ME THAT...
RECENTLY YOU'VE BEEN PUSHING YOURSELF TOO HARD.
HOW CAN YOU BE SO BLIND?
HUH? NO, I'M FINE, SO FINE!
PLEASE GO TO SLEEP!
ぽぴぃ
SKIP
MAKES ME...
JEALOUS!
HOW EMBAR-RASSING.
HE ALSO ASKED ME TO GET ALONG WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE MANY GIRL FRIENDS.
THAT SORT OF THING...

DIZZY
IT'S PART OF MY JOB TO MAKE SURE OTHER WORKERS STAY HEALTHY...
*NOT LISTENING.
WHAT KIND OF PLOT TWIST IS THIS?!
ROLL
どぼ
SPLASH
THUNK

FORGET ABOUT IT AND SLEEP!
FWUMP
AHHHH!
THAT WAS FAST!
SHE MUST HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED.
ZZZ...
TURN
SORRY ABOUT...
MMPH...
ALL OF THIS...
WHAT A MESS...
SOAKED
MAEKAWA...

I'M THE ONE...
WHO SHOULD BE APOLOGIZING.

SHOVE
COOLING GEL SHEET

MY CHEST...

FEELS HOT...

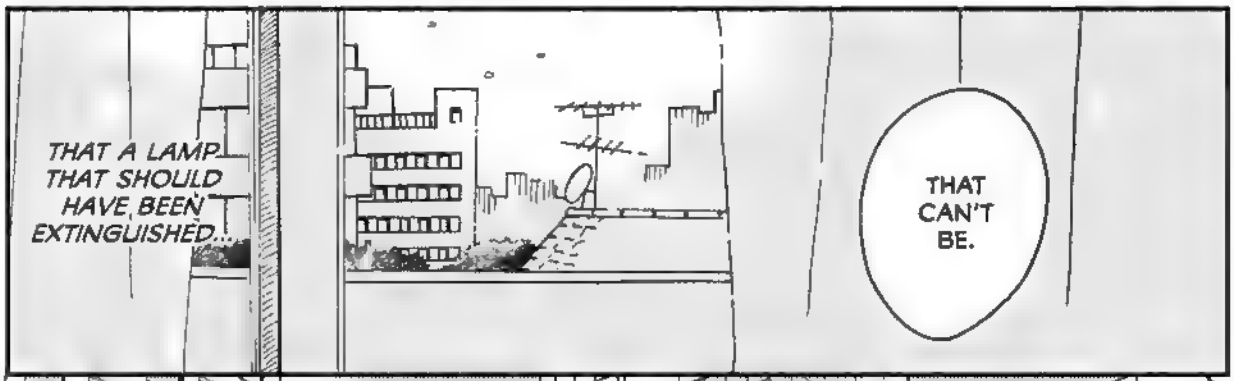
SCRITCH
KEEP THIS A SECRET.

AH...
SCRATCH
IT'S THE SOUND...

OF A
WORLD
BEING
BORN...

THROB
URGH, I DRANK TOO MUCH...
WAIT...
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
6:30
MMM..
BEEP
FWAP
MY MANU-SCRIPT!
CLEAN
HUH?
THAT DAY...
DID IT LOOK THIS NICE BEFORE?

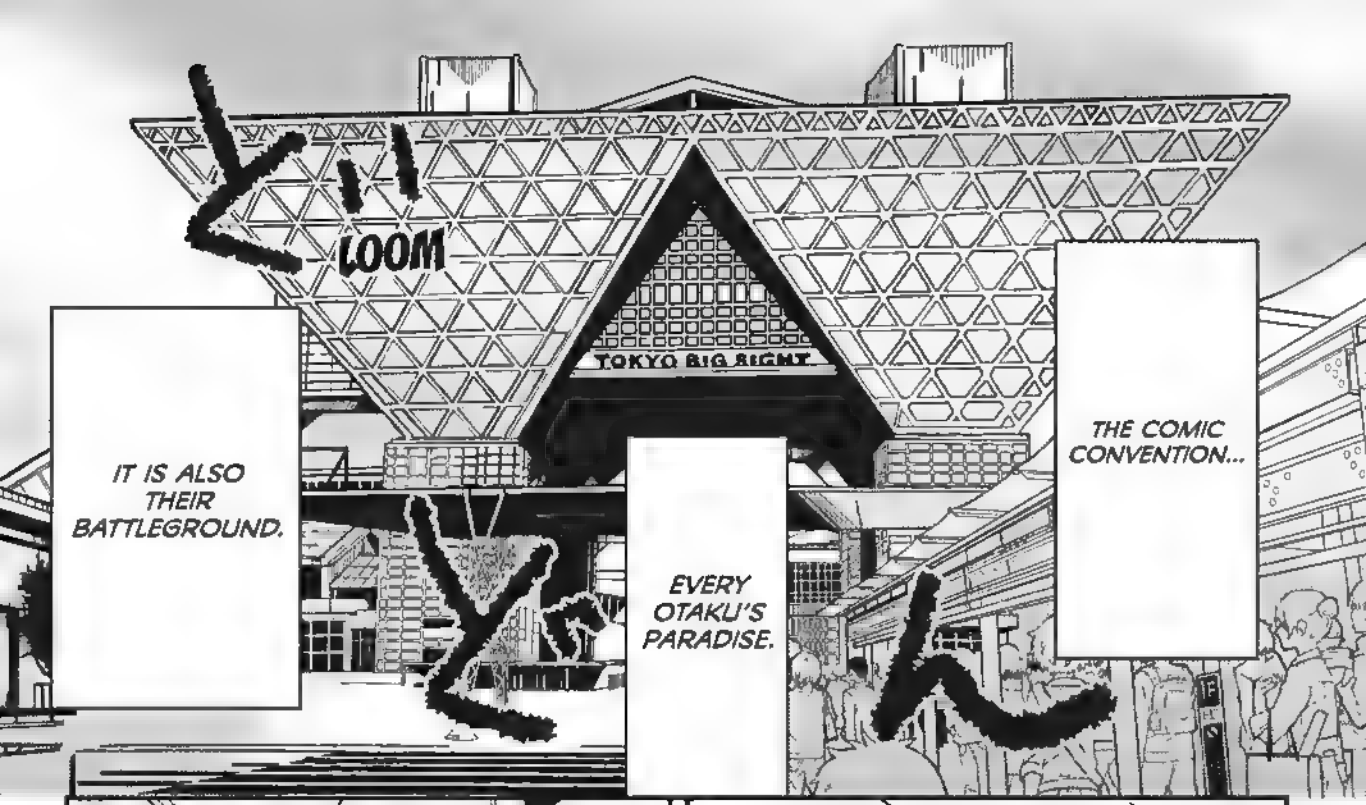
I STILL HAD NO IDEA...


THAT A LAMP THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN EXTINGUISHED...
THAT CAN'T BE.

HAD STARTED GLOWING ONCE MORE...
YAWN

Profiles

Makoto Shimizu (29 years old)		Akane Maekawa (25 years old)
October 23rd	Birthday	February 6th
R&D Software Department	Department	General Affairs
5 ft. 5 in.	Height	5 ft. 0 in.
Type O	Blood Type	Type AB

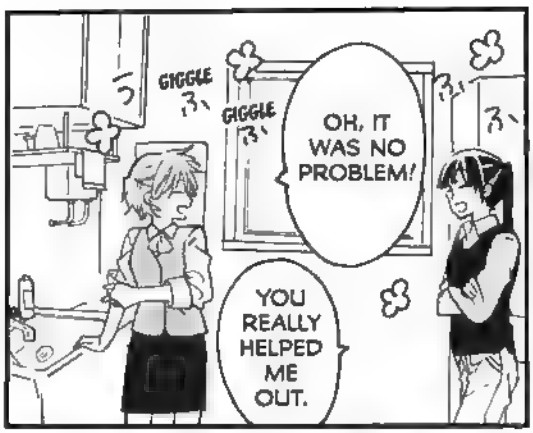

LOOM
TOKYO BIG SIGHT
IT IS ALSO THEIR BATTLEGROUND.
EVERY OTAKU'S PARADISE.
THE COMIC CONVENTION...

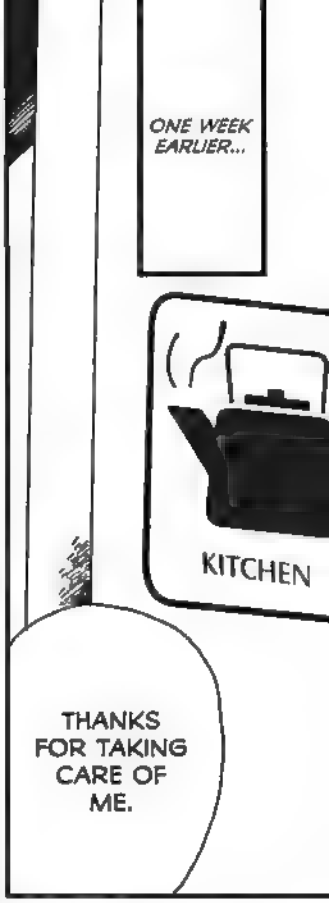
HNGH!
ENCOUNTERING THE PERFECT FAN ZINE IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EXPERIENCE.
SHIMIZU-SAN!
OTAKU HAVE THE WILLPOWER TO TRAVERSE ANY FLAMING INFERNO OR FREEZING TUNDRA TO FIND THEIR FATED FAN ZINE...!

TODAY IT'S NOT JUST YURI. ALL GENRES ARE BEING SOLD, SO THERE'LL BE A HUGE CROWD.
THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE!

YEAH, YEAH.
YOUR FEVER WILL COME BACK IF YOU GET TOO EXCITED!

Chapter 3


GIGGLE
GIGGLE
OH, IT WAS NO PROBLEM!
YOU REALLY HELPED ME OUT.


ONE WEEK EARLIER...
KITCHEN
THANKS FOR TAKING CARE OF ME.

ANYWAY.

だばー
SPLASH
WOW, YOU MUST HAVE HAD A NIGHTMARE!
DIDN'T I SPILL INK ON MY MANUSCRIPT BACK THEN?

WHEN IS THE NEXT ONE?
HUH?
I'M NOT TELLING YOU.
WELL, I GUESS IT'S FINE, SINCE I CAN MAKE IT IN TIME FOR THE COMIC CONVENTION...

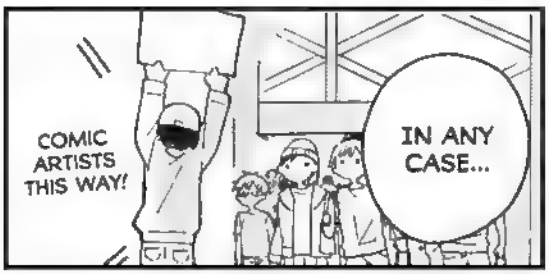
THAT'S RIGHT! COMIC CONVENTIONS ARE THE ONLY TIME I DON'T HAVE TO HIDE MY OTAKU SIDE! THEY ARE HEAVENLY PLACES WHERE OTAKU CAN FORGET ABOUT THEIR EVERYDAY LIVES AND REST THEIR SOULS...
I'M LOOKING FORWARD O IT!
YET ANOTHER BAD DREAM!
WHY NOT?!
I DON'T WANT TO SEE PEOPLE I KNOW THERE!
I WANT TO GO!
NOT A CHANCE!
DAYDREAM
PLEASE KEEP THE KITCHEN CLEAN! MANAGEMENT
HUH? OH, I'M JUST...
BY THE WAY, HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
LEAN
...FINE.

SWAP
OH, UM...
SHIMIZU-SAN?
URGH, MY HEART SKIPPED A BEAT!
I KNOW YOUR HOBBIES ARE IMPORT-ANT...
BUT IT'S YOUR JOB TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
RUMBLE
ONLY A LOW ONE!
SHE'S SMILING, BUT SHE'S STILL SCARY!
I PROMISE IT'S LOW!
YOU STILL HAVE A FEVER, DON'T YOU?
JOLT
THE CONVENTION ISN'T THIS WEEKEND, IS IT?
HUH?

I KNOW I'M NOT THAT TALENTED...
BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING MY FAN ZINES.
SORRY, BUT PLEASE FORGET ABOUT IT THIS TIME!
PLEASE REST PROPERLY!
I DON'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT THEM.
REACH
IN RETURN...
ほっ
PHEW
FINE.
ALSO, THERE ARE SOME LIMITED EDITION COMICS I WANT...
...

ONLY BECAUSE YOU WANT TO GO, AM I RIGHT?
パパパ
FANFARE
I'LL GO WITH YOU TO HELP OUT!
MAEKAWA HAS JOINED FORCES WITH YOU!

TEE-HEE!
WHAT IS WITH THAT FANTASY?
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO COME WITH ME ON YOUR DAY OFF YOU COULD HAVE GONE TO SEE A SPORTS GAME WITH YOUR RICH BOYFRIEND OR SOMETHING.


COMIC ARTISTS THIS WAY!
IN ANY CASE...

PHEW.
I'M NOT DATING ANYONE RIGHT NOW.
IS THAT SO?

IF YOU PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD, I'M TAKING YOU HOME!
I'M FINE ALREADY.
SHE'S SURPRISINGLY STUBBORN...

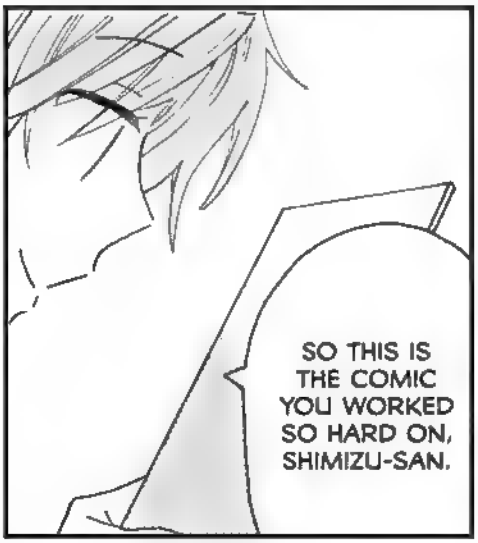
MY RELATIONSHIPS NEVER LAST LONG.
NOT LISTENING.
I WAS JUST RELIEVED TO HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S ALSO SINGLE!
"PHEW"?
HA HA HA!
NO, NO.
THAT'S WHEN YOU GET TREATED TO NICE MEALS AND EXPENSIVE PRESENTS.
WELL, THINGS ARE ALWAYS THE MOST FUN RIGHT AFTER YOU START DATING!
TH.NGS GET REAL WHEN THEY SAY WE SHOULD MOVE IN TOGETHER!
I THINK IT'S BETTER TO END THINGS QUICKLY ONCE YOU'RE BORED!
YOU'RE TELLING ME?
IF YOU ACT LIKE THAT YOU'LL NEVER GET MARRIED.
25 YEARS OLD
29 YEARS OLD
ARE YOU OKAY?
WOW...
THAT'S SHOCKING BUT VERY PRAGMATIC OF YOU.

FWAP

THIS IS OUR BOOTH?
YEAH.
I'M GLAD THE VOLUMES ARRIVED SAFELY.

I ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO THIS MOMENT. NOTHING BEATS IT!
SNIFF
WOW! IT'S A PROPER BOOK!

THIS TIME I SPLURGED AND PRINTED THE COVER ON SPECIAL PAPER.
TEE-HEE!


SO THIS IS THE COMIC YOU WORKED SO HARD ON, SHIMIZU-SAN.

THIS IS SO FUN AND REFRESHING!

I'LL DO MY BEST SO THAT MANY PEOPLE CAN READ YOUR WORK!
OKAY?
OH, OKAY.
HOW DO YOU WANT TO DISPLAY THEM?
MAEKAWA.
YES?
THANK YOU!
I KNOW I TOLD YOU NOT TO COME...
BUT HAVING SOMEONE HERE WITH ME...
MAKES ME REALLY HAPPY.

UH, IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH?
MAYBE A PRESENT? BUT YOU'RE USED TO GETTING NICE THINGS...
SERIOUSLY, YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH FOR ME RECENTLY! I WANT TO REPAY YOU.
IT'S NOT THAT BIG OF A DEAL.
ERR...
...
SHIMIZU-SAN, YOU'RE SO...
HMM...
I'M SURE THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE YOU COULD TALK TO, NOT JUST ME!
OH, I KNOW! I'LL TREAT YOU TO DINNER!

DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
I'VE OFFERED TO TREAT YOU BEFORE?
HUH?
THIS IS THE SECOND TIME.
NOTHING.
?
OH, REALLY?
BACK WHEN I JOINED THE COMPANY.
AH!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
I LOVED YOUR PREVIOUS WORK.
THAT'LL BE 300 YEN.
パチ CLAP
パチ CLAP
パチ CLAP
パチ CLAP
MAEKAWA, YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF THE REGISTER.
OKAY!
WHAT IS THAT?
IT MEANS THE EVENT HAS STARTED.

TOUCHED
IT TAKES A LOT OF COURAGE TO START UP A CONVERSATION.
I'M THANKFUL FOR HER DOING SO.
I REMEMBER HER FROM THE LAST CONVENTION.
THAT'S NICE.
TELLING AN ARTIST YOU LIKED THEIR WORK AS IS INTIMATE AS CONFESSING YOUR LOVE TO THEM!
DON'T BE SILLY!
SINCE YOU BOTH LIKE THE SAME THINGS, SHOULDN'T IT BE EASY TO TALK WITH EACH OTHER?
THAT'S NICE.
THIS IS THE PLACE OVERFLOWING WITH OUR LOVE AND DESIRE FOR THE SERIES, MAEKAWA!
NO, I'M NOT!
YOU'RE OVEREXAGGERATING AGAIN...

I THINK...
I'VE FORGOTTEN...
WHAT IT'S LIKE TO FEEL LIKE THAT.
BY THE WAY, I THOUGHT THAT ALL FAN ZINES WERE PERVERTED LIKE THE KIND YOU HAVE, BUT THAT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE THE CASE!
WHEN DID YOU LOOK THROUGH MY THINGS?!
OKAY!
I THINK I'VE GOTTEN THE HANG OF THINGS, SO YOU CAN GO CONFESS YOUR LOVE TO THE OTHER ARTISTS.
THANKS, I APPRECIATE IT.
WEST

PHEW.
OKAY!
I'LL BE BACK SOON!
YOU'RE MAEKAWA-SAN, RIGHT?
AFTER ALL, I'M A NEWBIE HERE!
SMILE
I CAN'T BE PICKY ABOUT MY WORK.
ISN'T IT BORING ALWAYS GETTING STUCK WITH THE MENIAL CHORES?
NOT AT ALL!
PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU NEED ME TO DO ANYTHING!
OKAY.

I'M SURE IT WOULD BE HARD TO TALK ABOUT IT WITH THE PEOPLE IN YOUR DEPARTMENT.
LET ME KNOW IF YOU NEED ANY ADVICE.
BUT I HOPE YOU FIND WORK YOU LIKE HERE.
EVERYONE'S DIFFERENT...
HUH?
SHE'S NICE, IF A LITTLE FRANK.
I FEEL LIKE I CAN TREAT HER LIKE ONE OF THE GUYS.
GASP
N-NOT THAT IT HAS TO BE ME, EITHER...
OH, SHIMIZU?

HERE'S YOUR CHANGE.
SHE'S THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF YOU, MAEKAWA-CHAN.
THINK OF HOW TO DO THE REST YOURSELF!
HA HA...
WHAAAT?
THANK YOU!
SIGH
SHIMIZU-SAN REALLY...

...PISSES ME OFF.
CLACK
YES?
EXCUSE ME.
GASP

LONG TIME NO SEE.

WOW, SHE'S CHATTING UP A CUSTOMER.
HMM?
WAIT, IS SHE IN TROUBLE?
IS SHE GETTING HIT ON IN THIS SACRED PLACE?!
ゴゴゴゴゴゴ
ROAR
AS IF I'D LET THAT HAPPEN!
FUCK OFF!
WHAM

HEH
YOU DON'T HAVE TO THANK ME.
UM...
FWUMP
SHIMIZU-SAN!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MAEKAWA?!
IN THE WAY
WHY SO COLD?
COULD YOU GO OVER THERE FOR A BIT?!
PUBLISHING
COMICS DIVISION
REACH
THAT'S NOT IT...
WAH...
WHAT? I INTERRUPTED YOU?

* IN JAPAN, MANGA CREATORS ARE REFERRED TO AS "SENSEI," MUCH LIKE TEACHERS AND DOCTORS.

Chapter 4

MAEKAWA...
"SENSEI"?

WHY DID HE CALL HER "SENSEI"?

UM...
WHO WAS HE?

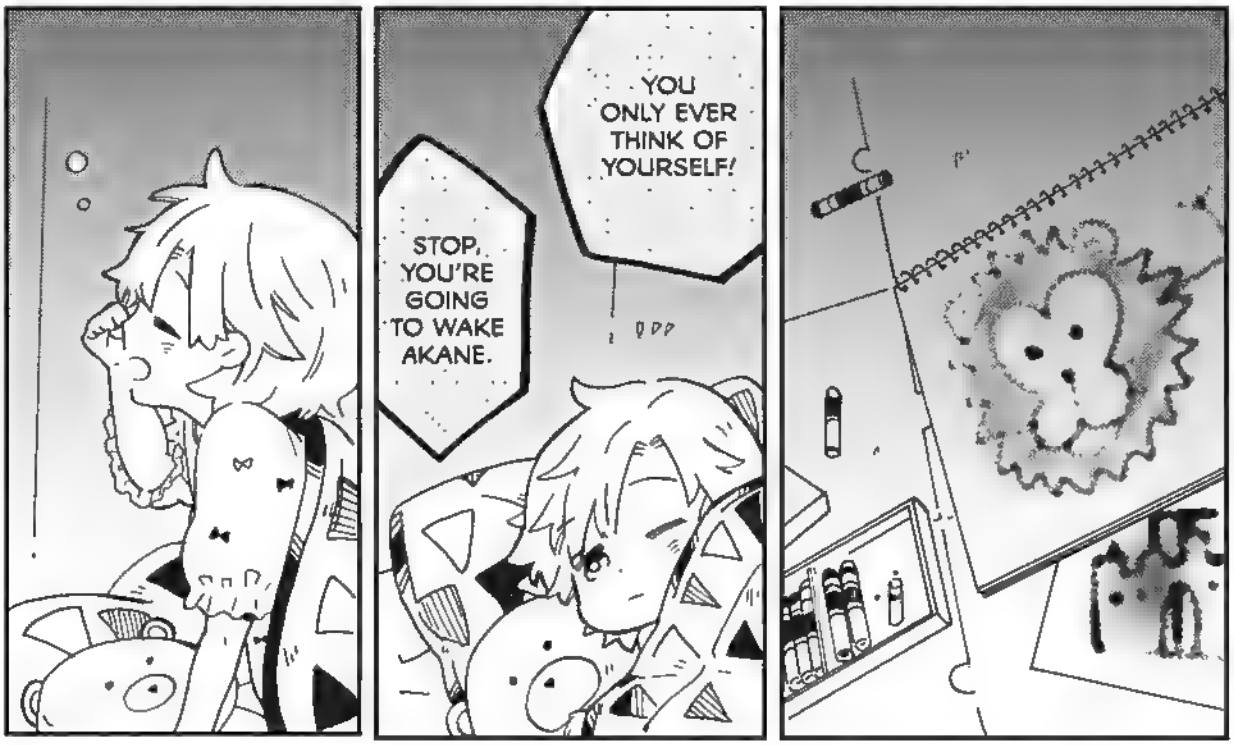
SHOULD I NOT ASK...
ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED JUST NOW?

MAEKAWA?

SORRY. THE CROWD MADE ME FEEL STUFFY IN THERE.
I'M FINE NOW!

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT ME?
HUH?!
UH, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT...
YEAH.
I WANT TO KNOW.
AS YOUR WORK SUPERIOR!

YOU...
IS THAT SO?
THEN I GUESS THERE'S NO HELPING IT!
SHIMIZU-SAN, HAVE YOU ALWAYS LIKED DRAWING?
YEAH.
I USED TO COPY MY FAVORITE COMICS.
SO DID I.
I LOVED DRAWING...
BECAUSE MY ART MADE MY FATHER SMILE.


STOP, YOU'RE GOING TO WAKE AKANE.
YOU ONLY EVER THINK OF YOURSELF!

WHY CAN'T YOU THINK ABOUT ME AND AKANE?
IS IT WRONG FOR ME TO CHALLENGE MYSELF NOW THAT WE'RE MARRIED?

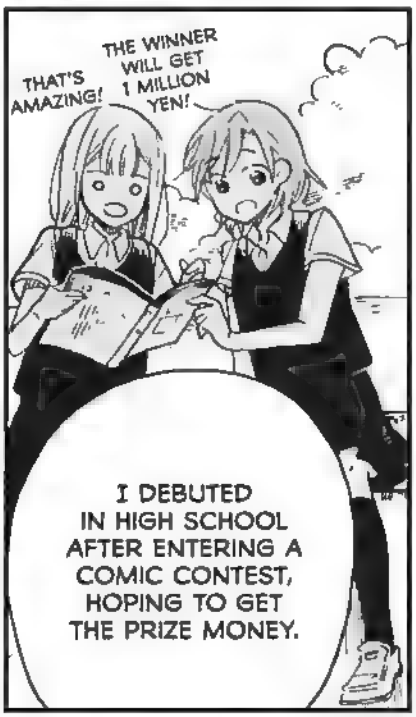
I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THAT MY PARENTS DIDN'T GET ALONG.

GASP
はっ
DADDY!
Daddy
Akane
Mommy
TA-DA!
YEAH...
YOU DID.
I THINK I DID A BETTER JOB THIS TIME!

IN THE END, THEY GOT DIVORCED.
DIVORCE APPLICATION

I WANTED TO HELP MY MOTHER, WHO HAD TO WORK HARD TO SUPPORT ME.
SEE YOU LATER!
DON'T FORGET YOUR LUNCH!
MY MOTHER AND I LIVED TOGETHER.

I WAS A MANGA ARTIST.
SORRY, I DON'T UNDER-STAND...
SOUNDS DRAMATIC.


I DEBUTED IN HIGH SCHOOL AFTER ENTERING A COMIC CONTEST, HOPING TO GET THE PRIZE MONEY.
THAT'S AMAZING!
THE WINNER WILL GET 1 MILLION YEN!

WHY?
THAT'S SUCH A SHAME!
BUT I ALREADY QUIT.
YOU JUST NOW REALIZED?
DAD, ISN'T THIS AMAZING?
BUT...
WAS SO THAT MY FATHER WOULD PRAISE ME THE WAY HE USED TO.
ANOTHER REASON I BECAME AN ARTIST...
YOU CAN'T MAKE A LIVING OFF OF COMICS.
WHY?
STOP THAT.

I'M DEFINITELY GOING TO MAKE IT BIG!
DON'T LUMP US TOGETHER!
CLATTER
SINCE YOU'RE MY KID, I'M SURE THINGS WON'T BE EASY FOR YOU, EITHER...
I LOST MY JOB AND MY FAMILY.
RING-A-LING
AKANE!
PANT
はっ
STARTING THAT DAY...

IT WAS ALL I COULD SEE.
I FOCUSED ON BECOMING A SUCCESS.
THANK YOU!
YOUR ARTWORK IS NICE. I THINK YOU'RE DOING WELL!
LOOM
JUST ADD A CONVENTIONAL LOVE STORY AND YOU'RE GOOD TO GO.
ALL YOU NEED IS PRETTY ART AND A STORY THAT'S EASY TO EMPATHIZE WITH.
SEE? IT'S EASY.

WAH!
YOUR LINES SHOW HOW BORED YOU WERE WHILE DRAWING.
TOUDOU-SAN, I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A MEETING!
READERS WILL SOON FORGET A WORK THAT MAKES A FOOL OUT OF THEM.
IS THAT REALLY THE KIND OF MANGA YOU WANT TO DRAW?

SORRY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM.
IS HE AN EDITOR?
OKAY.
WHAT IS WITH THAT GUY?
PLEASE DON'T INTERRUPT US!

WOW...

SHICKER
HE'S DANGEROUS, SO YOU SHOULD AVOID HIM.
I'LL DO THAT.
HE ONLY SMILES WHEN HE'S READING MANGA.

HIS NAME'S TOUDOU.
HE'S A WEIRDO WHO WILL DO ANYTHING FOR MANGA.

WHAT?
IT'S A PRO'S JOB TO DRAW WHAT THE READERS WANT, AFTER ALL.
I CAN DRAW WITHOUT HAVING SOMETHING THAT I *WANT* TO DRAW.
AKANE MAEKAWA AGAIN? I DON'T LIKE HER COMICS.
OH, HERE'S THIS MONTH'S EDITION.
I'M NOT WRONG!

DON'T ACT LIKE A KNOW-IT-ALL!
HA HA HA!
THIS ONE IS WAY MORE INTERESTING!
OH, WHICH ONE?
HER STORIES JUST SEEM SO BLAND. I CAN'T GET INTO THEM.
REALLY? BUT SHE'S POPULAR LATELY.
READERS WILL...
SOON FORGET...

CRUMPLE
THAT'S WHEN MY WRITER'S BLOCK BEGAN.

THE MORE I DREW, THE MORE I SUFFERED. IN TIME, I STOPPED DRAWING.

MY STANDARDS KEPT GETTING HIGHER AND HIGHER...
I DREW ONLY TO PROVE THOSE AROUND ME WRONG.

WHY?!
IN THE END...
WHY...?

I BECAME UNABLE TO SEE ANYTHING IN THAT WORLD.
I GAVE UP EASILY, SO I PROBABLY WASN'T CUT OUT FOR IT ANYWAY.
I WAS RIGHT TO FIND A NEW JOB.
THE END!
YOUR FACE SAYS MY STORY WAS DEPRESSING AND YOU'RE NOT SURE WHAT TO SAY.
HUH?
JOLT
LET'S GO HOME.

...
SORRY I TALKED SO MUCH ABOUT MYSELF.
IT'S FINE.
I'M GLAD TO MEET SOMEONE ELSE WITH EXPERIENCE.
SO YOU ALSO DREW COMICS!
TEE-HEE!
RIGHT!
SOME-ONE WITH EXPERIENCE?
NONCHALANT
A HOBBY?
OH, BUT PLEASE DRAW YURI.
IF I'M UP TO IT?
I KNOW IT WAS HARD FOR YOU TO DO AS A CAREER...
BUT IF YOU'RE UP TO IT, YOU CAN ALWAYS ENJOY IT AS A HOBBY LIKE I DO.

IT'S SUCH A SHAME THAT YOU QUIT AFTER FAILING JUST ONCE.

PEOPLE WHO QUIT AFTER TRYING THINGS JUST ONCE...
ARE THE WORST.

YOU'RE RIGHT.
YEP!

HA HA...
REALLY! YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON, MAEKAWA!
REALLY?
TH- THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS TRYING TO SAY!
HUH?
YOU'RE SO NAIVE.
SHIMIZU-SAN.

I JUST HAPPENED TO SEE IT, YOU KNOW.
WHAT?
YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA POST.
HUH?
YOU TRUSTED ME SO EASILY JUST BECAUSE I PRETENDED TO UNDERSTAND YOU.
I KNEW IT WAS A LIE THAT YOU GOT LOST AND FOUND YOURSELF THERE!
OF COURSE IT WAS.
HA HA!
HEY, YOU SHOULD TURN YOUR PHONE OFF.
DING
SHORE
Y-
TREMBLE
YOU...
YOU WROTE THAT YOU'D HAVE A BOOTH AT THE CONVENTION IN MARCH, SO I THOUGHT I'D TEASE YOU.

I HAD FUN TEASING YOU...
DUMBFOUNDED
あぜん
BUT I RAN INTO AN OLD EDITOR, SO I'M DONE.
RIGHT NOW I HATE DRAWING.
WHEN IT WAS MY JOB, I DREW SO MUCH THAT I GOT SICK OF IT.
BC
A
AT LEAST IT WAS A GOOD WASTE OF TIME!
I NEED TO STOP BY SOMEWHERE BEFORE GOING HOME. BYE!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WAIT...
...
GRAB
MAEKAWA!
SHE'S LYING!

ズ"ン
JOLT
I...
ぱっ
PWAP

...HATE YOU, SHIMIZU-SAN.
IT HURTS TO CONTINUE LOVING THINGS...
WHEN THEY'RE OUT OF MY REACH.
DON'T RUN AWAY.
I WANT SAY THAT...
NOT THAT I'M ONE TO TALK.
DOING NOTHING ISN'T GOING TO MAKE IT HURT ANY LESS.
BUT MAEKAWA...

Chapter 5

GIRLS ARE SCARY.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY'RE THINKING.
THAT'S WHY...
GRAB
MAEKAWA!

I'M SCARED TO DIG DEEPER.
SIGH
YOUR MEETING JUST NOW FINISHED?
THEY KEPT FIGHTING OVER TRIVIAL THINGS AGAIN..

I'D RATHER NOT HAVE TO WORK FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE...
ARE YOU GOING TO STAY ON THE PATH OF AN ENGINEER OR AIM FOR UPPER MANAGEMENT?
CAN'T YOU TAKE ANYTHING SERIOUSLY?
YOU'VE BEEN WORKING LATE RECENTLY, BOSS.
EXHAUSTED
くったり
EVEN THOUGH I'M A "LEADER," I'M NEVER PUT IN CHARGE OF ANYTHING.
GOING TO MEETINGS IS JUST A WASTE OF TIME.
I DON'T CARE WHAT KIND OF WORK I DO AS LONG AS IT'S ENOUGH TO FUND MY HEDONISTIC LIFESTYLE.
YOU BETTER NOT REGRET SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT LATER ON.

...
TURN
ふ
IT'S MAEKAWA.
DON'T ASSUME IT'S MY FAULT WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!
HURRY UP AND APOLOGIZE TO HER!
...
BE
THE POWER OF OUR BOND TOGETHER!
DUN-DUN

I HATE YOU.
I'M HERE!
THE PAST FEW WEEKS SHE WOULD COME OVER ON FRIDAY NIGHTS...
IT'S QUIET. I CAN ACTUALLY HEAR THE ANIME.
WHAT THE HECK...?
I'M AN ADULT...
SO IT DOESN'T BOTHER ME!
NO MATTER WHAT IS SAID TO ME...
I'M SATISFIED WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE.
FRIENDSHIPS WITH FLESH AND BLOOD GIRLS SURE ARE SHORT-LIVED.

I'M GLAD JUST TO HAVE EXPERIENCED ONE.

WHO COULD THAT BE?

DING
DONG
!

IS IT...?
KER-CHAK
MAEKAWA?!

AH...
NO, I'M THE MAILMAN.
OH, SORRY.
I FORGOT I ORDERED SOME OF HER OLD COMICS.
I'LL DIG UP YOUR DARK PAST AND FIND ALL OF YOUR SHORTCOMINGS!
NOT ACTING LIKE AN ADULT
ALL RIGHT!
JUST WATCH, MAEKAWA...
FLIP
THE STORY IS A LITTLE CLICHÉD...
SO THIS IS HER DEBUT WORK.
HOW OLD WAS SHE?
HER ART REALLY IS GOOD...

IT'S PULLING ME IN.
SHE'S GOOD AT DRAWING READERS INTO THE STORY.
BUT...
EVERYTHING IS DELICATE AND FEELS SO REAL.
THE EMOTIONS AND SCENERY...
IT'S NOT JUST HER ART THAT'S GOOD.
はー
SIGH
I ACCIDENTALLY SAID THAT SHE GAVE UP AFTER JUST ONE FAILURE...
BUT SHE WAS DEFINITELY SERIOUS WHILE DRAWING THIS.

WANT SOMEONE TO SAVE YOU?
MAEKAWA...
DIDN'T YOU JUST...
SHE'S THE ONE WHO PUSHED ME AWAY...
SO ANNOYING!
BESIDES, SHE VERBALLY ABUSED ME!
NO, IT'S NOT LIKE SHE ASKED ME TO HELP HER!
FEELING GUILTY

22:16
HELLO?
YES?
I'VE NEVER CALLED HER BEFORE, SO I'M NERVOUS!
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
OH, UM... THAT'S...
URK!
OH, CRAP!
YOU REALLY PICKED UP, MAEKAWA!
WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? YOU CALLED MY NUMBER.

BEEP
CALL ENDED
I JUST WANTED TO HEAR YOUR VOICE...
DON'T HANG UP ON ME!
SLAM
SIGH
SO? WHAT DO YOU WANT? IT'S NOT POLITE TO VISIT THIS LATE AT NIGHT.
YOU DID THE SAME THING TO ME.
BY THE WAY, IS YOUR FRIENDLINESS JUST AN ACT?
GIGGLE キャピ!
MAEKAWA FROM GENERAL AFFAIRS
I THOUGHT IT WAS A PRANK CALL.
THAT'S SO MEAN!

I CAME TO ASK YOU A FAVOR!
I WANT YOU TO TEACH ME HOW TO DRAW MANGA!
WHAM ドーン
WHAM
WHAM
HEY, GET OUT HERE! AT LEAST LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY!
OR WOULD YOU RATHER I READ YOUR MANGA OUT LOUD UNTIL YOU GIVE IN?
SHUT ばたん!
CLICK
NO WAY.
SIGH はぁ
YEAH.
DID YOU READ THEM?
BY THE WAY...
KER-CHAK カリ
YOU'RE GOING TO BOTHER MY NEIGH-BORS.
IT WORKED.

I DON'T USUALLY READ SHOUJO, BUT...
YOU REALLY ARE AMAZING!
I LIKED THEM.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DRAW THE STORIES YOU COME UP WITH!
ANYONE CAN DO THAT MUCH.
SINCE YOU'RE JUST DOING IT AS A HOBBY, YOU SHOULD DRAW HOW YOU WANT TO.
IN ANY CASE, PLEASE!
STOP IT.
ON HANDS AND KNEES.
IT JUST DIDN'T SEEM LIKE YOU FELT THAT WAY WHILE DRAWING.

I WANT TO DRAW COMICS THAT CAN INSPIRE OTHERS, TOO!
DRAWING WHAT I WANT STILL REQUIRES SKILL!
READING YOUR COMICS MADE ME COME HERE AND ASK YOU TO TEACH ME.
PLEASE USE WORDS I UNDERSTAND.
HNGH...
ALSO, IF I'M ABLE TO CREATE CONTENT THAT SHOWS OFF THE APPEAL OF MY OTP TO ITS HIGHEST LEVEL, MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO INSPIRE OTHER FAN-ZINE-DRAWING GODS TO CREATE CONTENT FOR THAT SHIP...
SLAM
SIGH
IF YOU INSIST...

PRACTICE DRAWING A STRAIGHT LINE.
WOBBLE
IF YOU'RE TOO EAGER TO DRAW, YOUR LINES WILL BE MESSY AND HARD TO TAKE IN.
THE BASICS ARE IMPORTANT!
YOU DON'T INTEND TO TEACH ME ANYTHING!
NO, IT'S AN EXCUSE FOR YOUR BEING UNABLE TO DRAW THE PERFECT LINE.
BUT THAT'S MY ENTIRE STYLE!
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
YOU'RE A GREAT ARTIST, SO TEACH ME HOW YOU GOT SO GOOD SO QUICKLY.
USING TRIAL AND ERROR TO SEE HOW I COULD INCORPORATE THE THINGS I HAD LEARNED INTO MY OWN WORKS...
WAS WHAT I FOUND THE MOST FUN.
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!
I DIDN'T USE ANY PARTICULAR METHODS.

OH...
GIGGLE
IT'S NOTHING.
WHAT?
DO YOU FEEL DIFFERENTLY, SHIMIZU-SAN?
...
THAT SUITS YOU.
AHAP
YOUR LINES LOOK TERRIBLE!
WHAAAT?!
DRAW THEM AGAIN!

YOU DON'T EXPRESS EMOTIONS JUST THROUGH DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSIONS.
?!
THAT MOVE THAT YOU'RE DOING!
IF YOU GET BORED EASILY, YOU'LL NEVER GET BETTER...
わ WHINE ん
I'M BORED! I WANT TO PRACTICE SOMETHING ELSE!
THE CHARACTERS YOU DRAW SHOULD LOOK AS REALISTIC AS LIVING HUMANS.
ALWAYS LOOK AT HOW THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU MOVE AND ACT.
YOU DRAW ONE LINE AFTER ANOTHER AND WHEN YOUR STORY STARTS TO COME ALIVE...
EVEN ON A BORING DAY...
THERE ARE TONS OF THINGS FOR YOU TO LEARN.

HMM?
YOU'RE SO HAPPY...
YOU FEEL LIKE YOU CAN BREAK FREE.

MAEKAWA-SENSEI...
YOU CAN'T LEAVE UNTIL I SAY IT'S OKAY TO.
THE MORNING SUNLIGHT BURNS MY EYES...
CHIRP
CHIRP
OH SENSEI, THAT WAS SUCH A PASSIONATE LINE. KYAA...
GEEZ, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
WHAT?
MAEKAWA.
URK!
YOU'RE HEAVY...
DON'T JUST HOG THE BED TO YOURSELF, ASSHOLE!

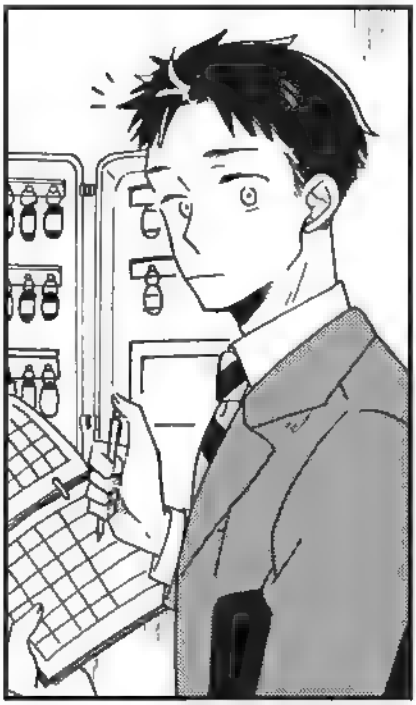
I CAN'T MAKE THEM DISAPPEAR FOR YOU...
BUT EVEN IF IT'S JUST A LITTLE AT A TIME...
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE...
WHO CAN RESOLVE PROBLEMS FROM YOUR PAST.
LET'S THINK BACK...
TO WHAT WAS FUN IN THE PAST.

AHHH!
PWUMP
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
JUUUUST KIDDING! A HA HA HA HA HA!
FLUSH
GIRLS ARE SCARY.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE THINKING.
SERIOUSLY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WAAAH, YOU'RE SCARING ME!
YOU HAVEN'T IMPROVED AT ALL! ARE YOU EVEN TRYING?!
BUT...

LET'S THINK BACK...
Chapter 6
TO WHAT WAS FUN IN THE PAST.

IT'S TIME FOR YOUR LUNCH BREAK.
GASP
OH, THANKS.

DAZE
SHRED
SHRED
MAEKAWA?



OH, RIGHT.
DID YOU MAKE UP WITH SHIMIZU?
NOW IT WON'T BE IN THE WAY!
WE'RE IN THE BUSY SEASON, SO YOU MUST HAVE A LOT TO DO.
I'M JUST GETTING RID OF SOME PAPERWORK.
PLEASE GET ALONG WITH HER-
CLANK
THAT'S GOOD.
UHHH, YES!
KIDOGUCHI-SAN, YOU'RE ALWAYS WORRYING ABOUT SHIMIZU-SAN.
HMM?
WHIR
FIXED IT!
AW...
I'M SORRY.
LOOKS LIKE A PAPER JAM.

YOU AND SHIMIZU-SAN USED TO DATE, RIGHT?
HUH?
DO YOU HAVE ANY LINGERING ATTACHMENT TO HER?
I THINK YOU'RE BETTER OFF FOCUSING ON YOUR LOVE LIFE THAN WORRYING ABOUT ME.
THAT'S NO GOOD.
ISN'T SHE CRUEL?
SHE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO HER OWN THING WHENEVER SHE HAD FREE TIME...
YEAH, BUT THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO.
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU TODAY?
THAT SMILE DOESN'T REACH YOUR EYES.
IF YOU DO, I'LL SUPPORT YOU!
MAEKAWA...

WELL, I SUPPOSE I AGREE.
BYE!
SEE YOU TOMORROW!
BUT I'M A LITTLE WORRIED.
SHE TENDS TO DO WHAT SHE WANTS AND PROCRASTINATE WHEN IT COMES TO HER OWN PROBLEMS...
SIGH
はぁ
TURN
SEE YOU TOMO-
HEY!
ぽん
PAT

YOU'RE LEAVING WORK LATE TONIGHT.
IT'S RARE THAT WE GET OFF AT THE SAME TIME.
THE STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING IS COMING UP SOON.
OH, IS THAT SO.
SIGH
OH, IT'S YOU.
PLEASE, DON'T LOOK SO HAPPY TO SEE ME.
IT'S LIKE YOU FLIPPED A SWITCH...
YOU'RE SMART FOR THINKING OF THAT.
...
WANT TO PLAY A GAME?
NO.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD LEAVE EARLIER.
SOMETIMES IT MAKES ME LATE IN THE MORNINGS.
YEAH.
THIS LIGHT TAKES FOREVER.
...
I HAVE FOOD WAITING FOR ME AT HOME.
OH, REALLY?
OH, RIGHT! I STILL HAVEN'T TREATED YOU TO DINNER YET. WANT TO STOP SOMEWHERE?
I CAN'T KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING!
HUH? WHAT'S THAT? WOW!
UNTIL NOW, I ALWAYS DEPENDED ON MAEKAWA LEADING IT...

ALL RIGHT. IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.
OKAY. MAYBE NEXT TIME.
IF I'M TOO INSISTENT SHE'LL REALLY START TO HATE ME...
HMM...
I'M TOO LAZY TO GO BACK...
OH, WE ALREADY PASSED THE STORE.
STEP
STEP
AH...
RUMBLE

BEER
DAMAME
U PORK
ED EGG
CHEERY
DO AS YOU WISH...
CAN I ADD CHILI OIL?
VINEGAR AND BLACK PEPPER ARE GOOD, TOO!
THANKS FOR WAITING!
TA-DA!
I'M DIGGING IN~!
HUH?
ARE YOU PRACTICING YOUR ARTWORK?
NOT REALLY. THERE IS A LOT OF YURI ANIME OUT THIS SEASON, SO I DON'T HAVE TIME.
¥500
IT'S HARD TO FOCUS WHEN YOU'RE ALONE.
DON'T YOU AGREE?
TEACH ME AGAIN SOME TIME.
JUST KIDDING! I PRACTICE SOMETIMES!
DON'T LOOK AT ME WITH THOSE EYES!

YOU ONLY ASKED ME TO TEACH YOU...
BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD MAKE ME WANT TO DRAW COMICS AGAIN, RIGHT?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO SO FAR.
D-DON'T SAY THAT!
YOU WANT TO DRAW AGAIN, DON'T YOU?
I CAN'T JUST IGNORE THAT!
YOU'RE SO STUBBORN...
PLUS, IF I GET YOU DRAWING AGAIN, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONVINCE YOU TO DRAW GOD-TIER FAN ZINES OF MY OTP!
I'M NOT DOING THAT.
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO THANK ME BY TREATING ME TO RAMEN?
VROOM
VROOM
DON'T COMPLAIN. I JUST BOUGHT A LIMITED EDITION DVD BOX SET AND A COLLECTION OF ARTBOOKS, SO I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY.

NOW WE'RE EVEN.
A HA HA!
SHIMIZU-SAN...
HMM?
WHY DID YOU DATE KIDOGUCHI-SAN?
WHY SO SUDDEN?
YOU KNEW ABOUT THAT?
PEOPLE IN GENERAL AFFAIRS KNOW EVERYTHING.
OH, I WAS JUST CURIOUS.

IRK
お
BUT I CAN TALK ABOUT MY OTP AS MUCH AS YOU WANT!
I'M NOT GOOD AT TALKING ABOUT MYSELF.
I THOUGHT YOU WOULDN'T HAVE DATED HIM IF YOU WANTED TO FOCUS ON YOUR OWN HOBBIES FROM THE BEGINNING.
OH...
I TOLD YOU...
ABOUT MY PAST.
WE'RE *NOT* EVEN.

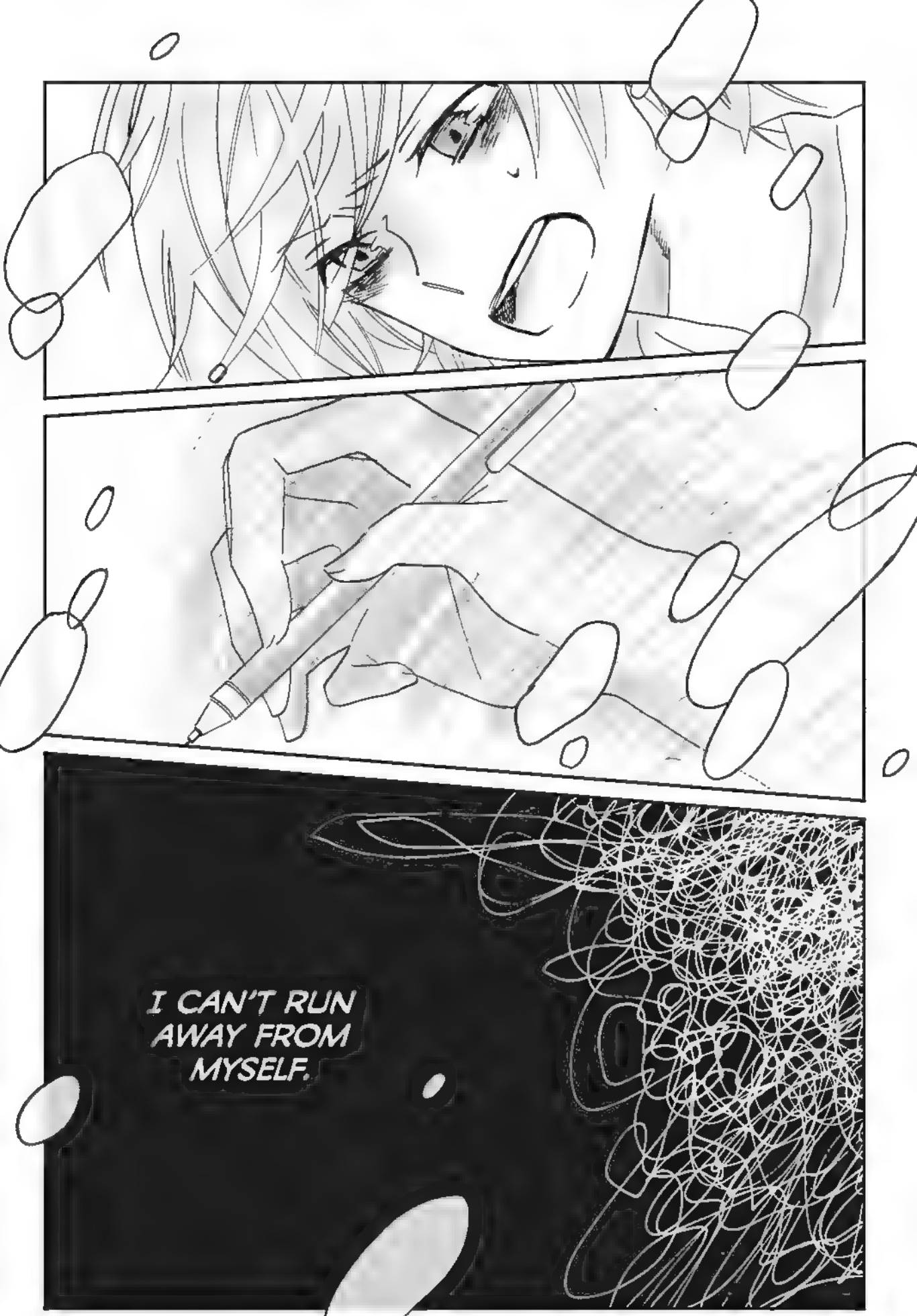
WELL...
IT'S NOT THAT INTERESTING, REALLY.
BACK WHEN I WAS IN SCHOOL...
I WAS TEASED BY PEOPLE ASKING IF I WAS A LESBIAN.
NONE OF THE GIRLS IN MY CLASS WANTED TO BE MY FRIEND.
OVER THAT?
THEY WERE JUST KIDS.
HA HA!
I SEE...
BUT NOTHING DID!
I THOUGHT SOMETHING WOULD CHANGE IF WE STARTED DATING.
KIDOGUCHI AND I GET ALONG.
BUT IT BOTHERED ME, SO I WANTED TO PROVE THEM WRONG.

THAT SOUNDS SO CHILDISH WHEN I SAY IT OUT LOUD.
IT JUST... DIDN'T WORK OUT.
I DIDN'T WANT TO BE ANYTHING.
IF I BECAME SOMEONE'S GIRLFRIEND, I FELT LIKE I WOULDN'T BE MYSELF ANYMORE, YOU KNOW?
YOU'VE CHANGED A LOT, SHIMIZU-SAN.

I THINK YOU DO QUITE A BIT...
...
I CAN'T CHANGE LIKE THAT.
ぽん!
PAT
ER...
UM...
DON'T WORRY!

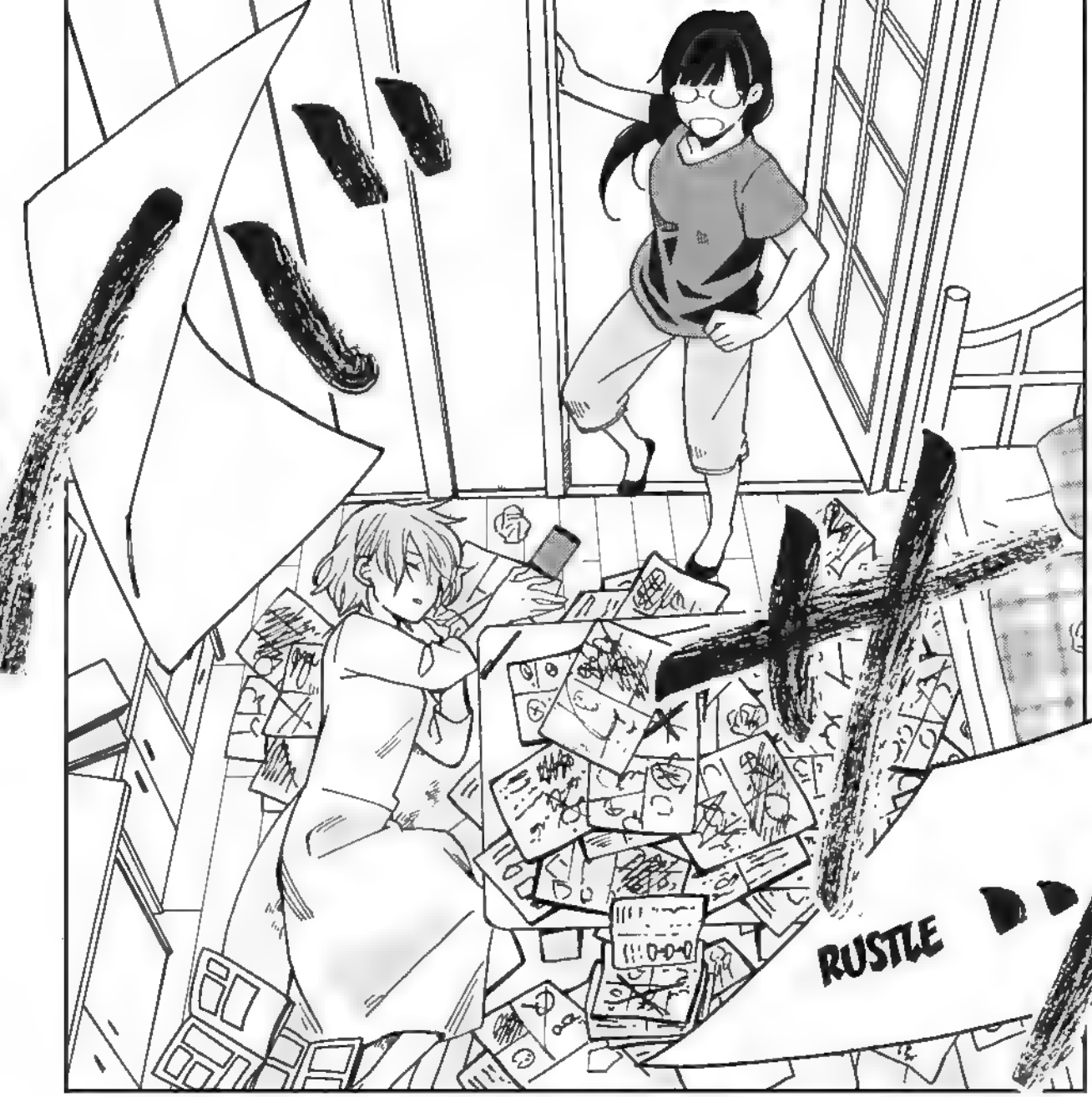
JUST TAKE YOUR TIME!
N-NOT THAT I'M ONE TO GIVE ADVICE, BUT...
I WANT TO CHANGE.
YOU'RE BAD AT CHEERING PEOPLE UP.
I'M NOT USED TO IT.
D-DON'T GET ANY WEIRD IDEAS!
DON'T WORRY.
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN WHO YOU LIKE.
MEANIE...

BUT I CAN'T CHANGE.
NO MATTER WHERE I RUN TO..
THE PAIN NEVER STOPS.

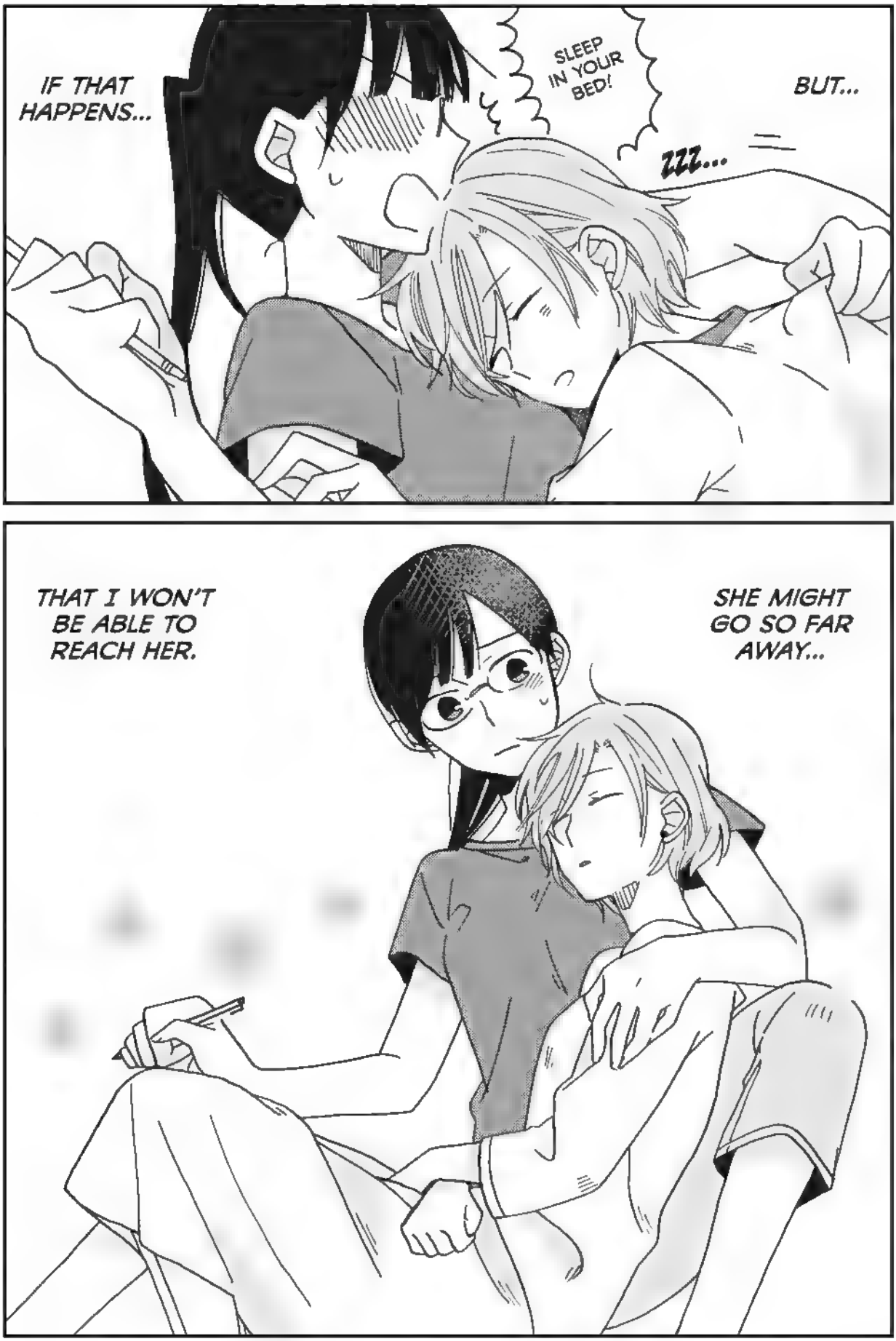

I CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM MYSELF.

I WORKED ON MY MANUSCRIPT OVER THE WEEKEND...
BUT I SHOULD STUDY FOR WORK, TOO!
SLOUCH
ALL RIGHT!
BUZZ BUZZ
I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO WORK TOMORROW...
MECHANICAL MOVEMENT
...
RING
TCH.
IS SHE NOT GOING TO PICK UP?
RING
MAEKAWA STILL HASN'T RETURNED THE DVDS I LENT HER!
GASP
STUDY TIME OVER

HEY, MAEKAWA?
CAN I HAVE MY DVDS BACK?
THAT'S YOUR VOICE, RIGHT? WAS THAT EVEN JAPANESE?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, MAEKAWA?!
WAH!
PHUMP
CLICK


RUSTLE

I THINK...
RIGHT NOW...
HEY, MAEKAWA-SAN!
MAEKAWA! ARE YOU OKAY?!
I CAN DRAW THE REST OF THE STORY...
SHE WOULD BE ABLE TO ENJOY IT.
TAKE A BREAK!
LET GO OF THAT PEN!
I WAS SURE THAT IF MAEKAWA STARTED DRAWING COMICS AGAIN...
SUNDAY EVENING ← FRIDAY NIGHT
FOR HOW LONG?
YOU DID...
ALL THIS BY YOURSELF?


IF THAT HAPPENS...
SLEEP IN YOUR BED!
BUT...
zzz...
THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO REACH HER.
SHE MIGHT GO SO FAR AWAY...

Chapter 7

WHY ARE YOU WEARING THAT?!
HIKING GEAR
WHAT?
FOR RESEARCH.

TOUDOU!

YOU EVEN MADE ONE GIRL QUIT DRAWING BECAUSE OF SOMETHING YOU SAID!
IF YOU CONTINUE TO ACT LIKE THE HERO OF A SPORTS SERIES FROM THE SHOWA ERA, YOU'LL JUST BOTHER THE YOUNGER EDITORS!
AND YOU WEREN'T EVEN HER EDITOR!
OH...
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT MAEKAWA-SENSEI?

THERE'S NO TIME FOR THAT!
YUMENO-SENSEI IS HAVING A HARD TIME DRAWING A SCENE, SO I'M HELPING OUT.
IT JUST DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT.

SERIOUSLY...
はー
SIGH

YOU'RE STILL SAYING THAT?
SHE NEEDS TO GROW AS A PERSON.
BEFORE HER WORK CAN BE IMPROVED...
SHE'S JUST TAKING A LONG BREAK.
YAY!
HERE.
THIS WILL GIVE HER A CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE OTHER TYPES OF WORK.
ALL EDITORS WANT THEIR AUTHORS TO PUBLISH FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME, DON'T THEY?
BEING YOUNG AND PASSIONATE WILL ONLY GIVE YOU A MOMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT.
SHE WAS FAIRLY NAIVE.
PART OF IT WAS MY FAULT, FOR NOT SUPPORTING HER ENOUGH...
HEY, NOW...
GRAB
THERE'S NO POINT IF THEY STOP PUBLISHING ALTOGETHER!

I WONDER WHAT MAEKAWA LIKES.
SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE IF SHE HAD SOMEONE TO SUPPORT HER...

IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT SHE PASSED OUT.
SHE MUST HAVE USED UP ALL HER ENERGY.

I'LL JUST GRAB A VARIETY.
TOSS
TOSS

I CAN DRAW THE REST OF THE STORY...
I THINK RIGHT NOW...

I'M BORROWING YOUR HOUSE KEY, OKAY?
ZZZ...
I CAN'T BELIEVE THE STATE I FOUND HER IN...

I WONDER IF SHE WANTS TO RETURN TO BEING A COMIC ARTIST.
BUT IF SHE DOESN'T SLOW DOWN, SHE'LL COLLAPSE AGAIN...
I WONDER IF SHE'LL QUIT HER JOB.
IF SHE STARTS DRAWING AGAIN...

YAWN
ふぁ
ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?
YEAH.
SIT UP
むく
OH, YOU'RE AWAKE.
HMM?
WHY ARE YOU HERE, THOUGH?
I KNEW YOU'D ASK...
JELLY WITH FRUIT CHUNKS
PUDDING BIG-SIZE
YOU SAID YOURSELF THAT IT'S GOOD TO FOCUS, BUT TAKING BREAKS IS IMPORTANT.
IS THAT SO? I'M SORRY.
...
MAE-KAWA, DO YOU...
I'M... NOT SURE.
PART OF ME WANTS TO...
BUT ANOTHER PART OF ME IS AFRAID TO FAIL AGAIN.
WANT TO GO BACK TO BEING A MANGA ARTIST?

I DON'T WANT YOU TO BE AN ARTIST AGAIN.
I SEE.
HMM ..
WHAT'S WITH THAT?
UP UNTIL NOW, YOU'VE ALWAYS ENCOURAGED ME TO DRAW!
YES, BUT YOU CAN DRAW MANGA WITHOUT PUBLISHING IT.
I DON'T PLAN ON DOING IT JUST AS A HOBBY!
IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT PRIDE THAT YOU COLLAPSED! YOU PUSHED YOURSELF TOO HARD DESPITE NOT BEING MENTALLY PREPARED.
PLEASE DON'T DISTURB ME ANYMORE!
IRK
I DON'T CARE ABOUT MYSELF THAT MUCH.
I DON'T WANT TO PUSH MY OPINION ONTO YOU. BUT...

I'VE SPENT MORE TIME WITH YOU AS A FRIEND...
THAN I HAVE WITH YOU AS A FELLOW ARTIST.
GRAB
SO...
DON'T SAY THAT YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT YOURSELF!

ピコDING-!

SHE SAW MY MESSAGE.
IT'S FROM MY MOM.
OH.
BUZZ
...
WELL... THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO SAY!
I'M GOING...
TO MAKE A PHONE CALL.
CAN YOU PLEASE WAIT HERE?

AKANE?
MOM, CAN YOU TALK NOW?
YES. I'M OFF WORK TODAY.
I CAME TO VISIT YOUR GRAND-MOTHER.
OKAY.
YOU SHOULD VISIT HER SOMETIMES, TOO.
MAYBE NEXT TIME...
YEAH.
...
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO ASK ME SOMETHING ABOUT WORK?
LIKE ABANDONING THINGS THAT ARE PRECIOUS TO YOU WHEN YOU GET UPSET.
YOU INHERITED THE WEIRDEST HABITS FROM YOUR FATHER.
SORRY.
UGH...
YOU ALWAYS START TO MUMBLE AND ACT DISTANT WHEN YOU HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO SAY!
I KNOW OUR DIVORCE WASN'T FAIR TO YOU.
YOUR FATHER AND I...
MIGHT HAVE BEEN ASKING FOR TOO MUCH FROM EACH OTHER.
NO, IT'S FINE.

I'VE SORTED OUT MY FEELINGS REGARDING THAT.
I HELD A GRUDGE BACK IN THE PAST...
BUT I THINK IF IT'S WHAT YOU BOTH WANTED, GETTING DIVORCED WAS A BETTER CHOICE THAN FORCING YOURSELVES TO STAY TOGETHER FOR MY SAKE.
HMM, MAYBE WE RAISED YOU A LITTLE TOO WELL.
HAVE YOU GOTTEN IN TOUCH WITH DAD LATELY?
YES.
HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU BECAUSE HE SUDDENLY STOPPED SEEING YOUR COMICS IN MAGAZINES.

YES. HE SAID HE STILL HAS ALL OF THE MAGAZINES.
SO HE READ THEM?
HE SHOULD HAVE JUST GOTTEN IN CONTACT WITH YOU AGAIN, BUT HE KEPT HESITATING—
NO!
I THINK HE FELT RESPONSIBLE...
FOR SAYING SOMETHING THAT MAY HAVE CAUSED YOU TO QUIT.

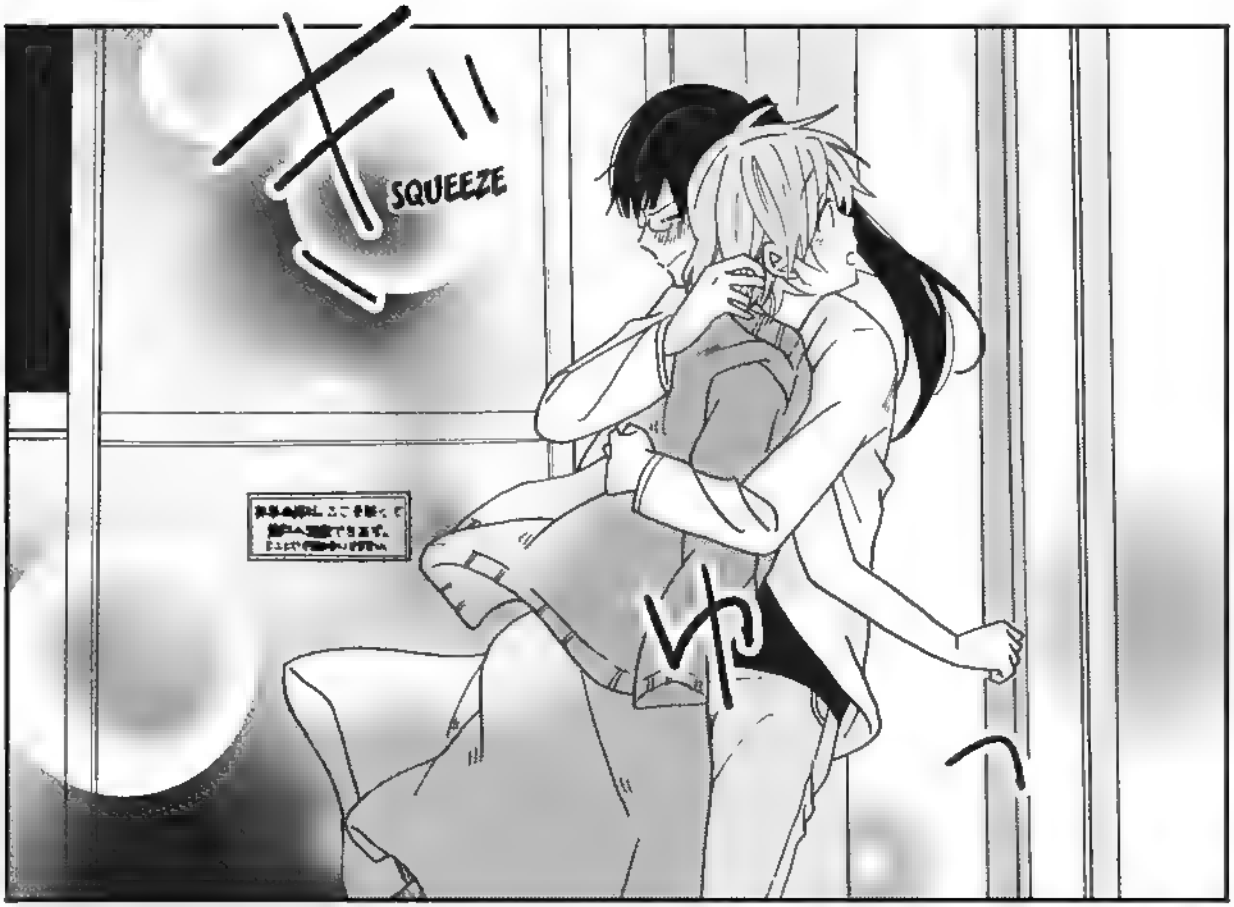
I WANTED HIM...
TO BE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD, EVEN IF HE CHOSE THE WRONG PATH IN LIFE.
I WANTED TO IMPROVE.
I WANTED TO SHOW HIM THAT WHAT HE SAID WAS WRONG.
I SEE.
THAT APPLIES TO YOU, TOO.

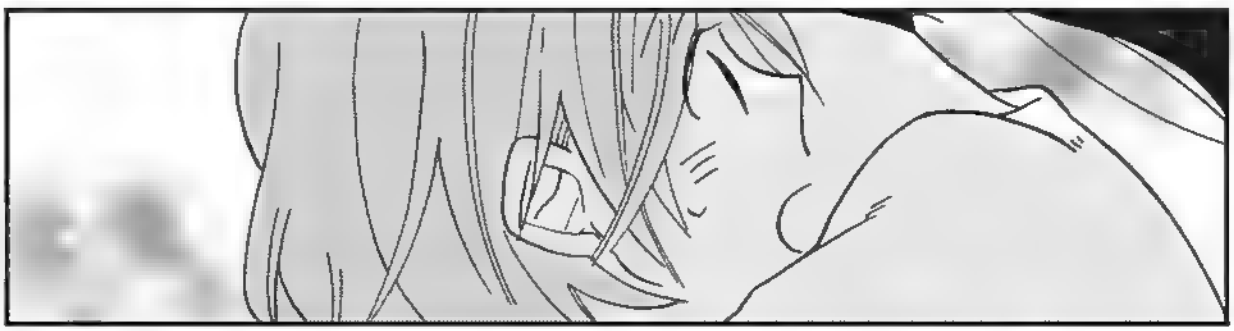
THAT'S MY WISH.
I WANT YOU TO HOLD YOUR CHIN UP AND CHOOSE, AKANE.
IT'S YOUR DECISION WHICH ROAD TO TAKE.
SHE LOOKS COLD OUT THERE.
I...
MOM...
I'LL GIVE HER A JACKET.
MAEKAWA-
RATTLE

I WANT TO BE A COMIC ARTIST AGAIN.
BUT...
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT.
OKAY.
THERE ARE STILL THINGS I WANT TO PROVE TO OTHERS.
NOT JUST TO DAD, EITHER.

SO YOU'RE GOING TO BE AN ARTIST AGAIN?
I'M SORRY.
IT'S FINE. IT'S YOUR DECISION, AFTER ALL.
AH!
YOU WERE LISTENING IN ON ME!
I WASN'T!
I JUST THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE COLD...
I'M SORRY.
I WAS A LITTLE OVERBEARING...
LIKE I SAID, IT'S FINE!
I'M SORRY.
JUST DON'T OVEREXERT YOURSELF!

HUH?
I'M SORRY I SAID I HATED YOU!
I TOOK MY ANGER OUT ON YOU EVEN THOUGH IT WAS MY OWN PROBLEM.
HA-HA-HA...
OH, THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE APOLOGIZING FOR? IT'S OKAY. I FORGOT ALL ABOUT THAT.
HAH?
SO IT BOTHERED HER, TOO...
SIGH
I CAN'T BELIEVE I WORRIED ABOUT IT.
WH-WHAT'S WITH THAT REACTION?!
IT'S FINE NOW.
I...


SQUEEZE

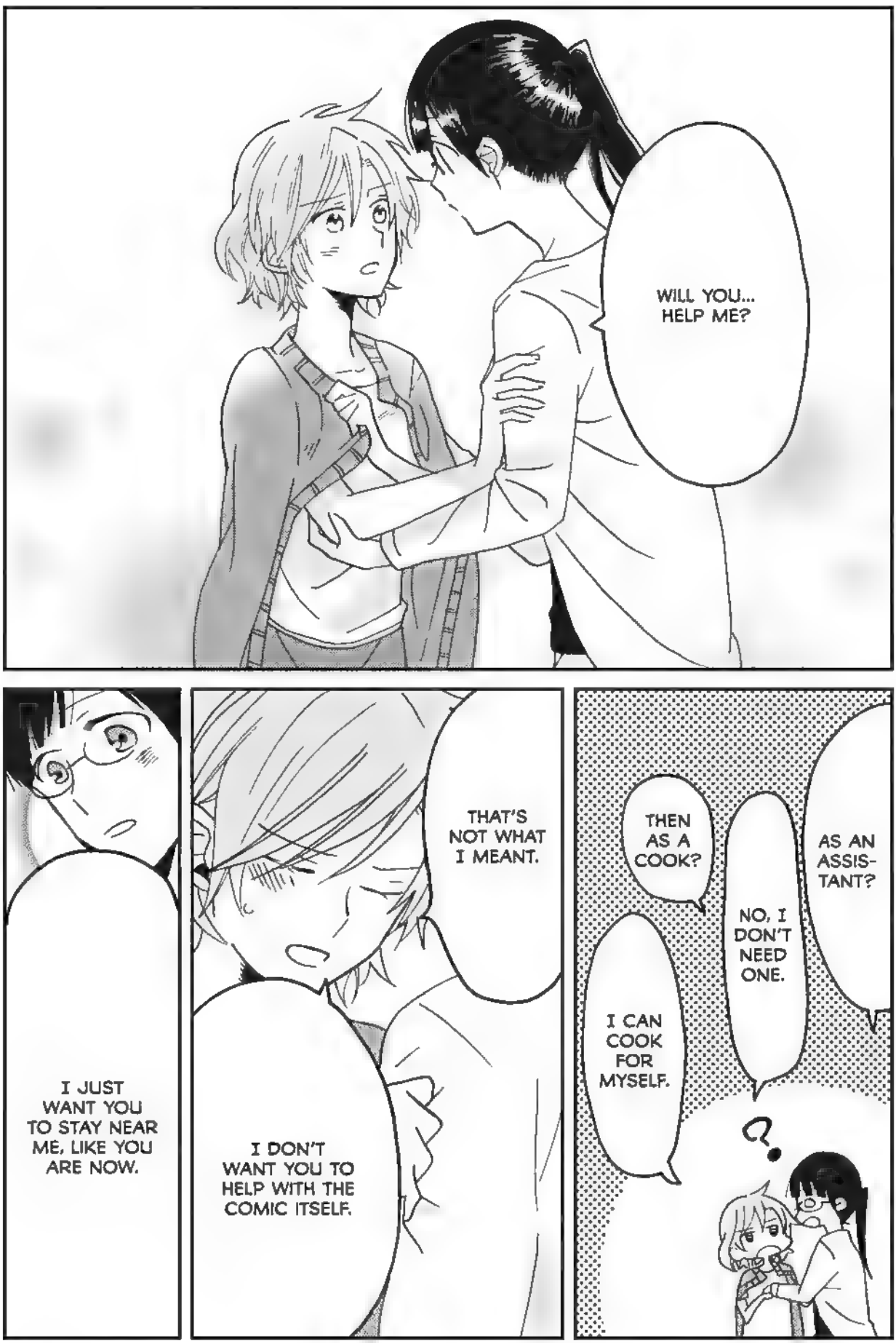


I JUST GOT A LITTLE LONELY...
OH, SORRY...

HUH?
I-I'M NOT SURE.
WHAT'S WRONG?

TH-
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT QUIT WORK...
IF YOU WENT BACK TO DRAWING COMICS FOR A LIVING...
PLUS, I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THE PUBLISHER WILL EVEN ACCEPT IT.
I DON'T EVEN HAVE A FULL MANUSCRIPT YET.
THERE'S NO WAY THINGS WOULD GO THAT WELL SO QUICKLY!
STILL...!
BUT AKANE...
SOOOB
PLEASE DON'T CALL ME THAT.
I FINALLY MET A FELLOW COMRADE...

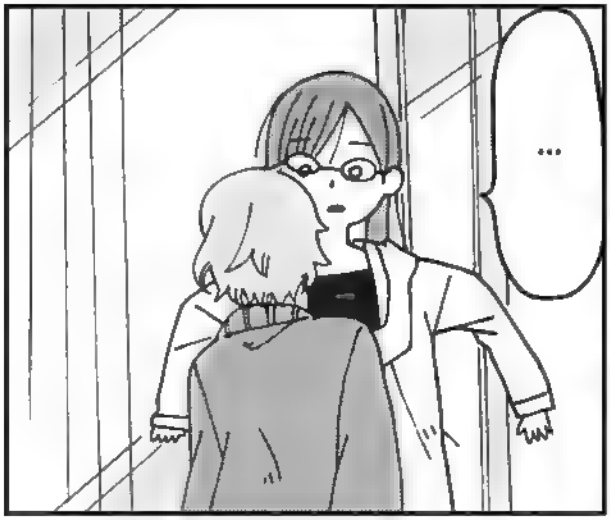
DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE NEARBY...
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A BOYFRIEND.
EVEN JUST A FRIEND WILL DO.
IN ORDER TO DO THINGS OVER, YOU NEED TO FACE YOUR PAST.
CLENCH
SHIMIZU-SAN.
WHO CAN BRING YOU BACK TO YOUR SENSES WHEN YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE SWALLOWED UP BY YOUR WORK?


WILL YOU... HELP ME?
AS AN ASSIS-TANT?
NO, I DON'T NEED ONE.
THEN AS A COOK?
I CAN COOK FOR MYSELF.
?
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.
I DON'T WANT YOU TO HELP WITH THE COMIC ITSELF.
I JUST WANT YOU TO STAY NEAR ME, LIKE YOU ARE NOW.

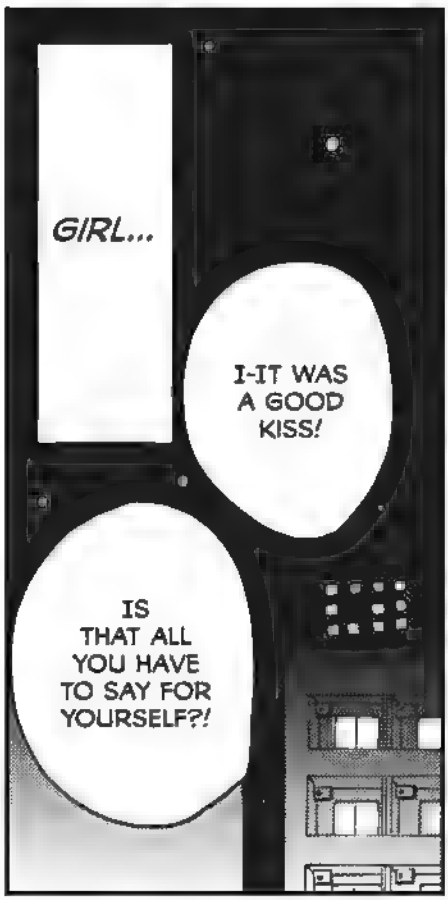
SO I... CAN KEEP HANGING OUT WITH YOU?
YES. I WANT YOU TO.
WHEN I'M WITH YOU...
THE THINGS I WAS WORRYING ABOUT SEEM SO SILLY!
LET'S DO OUR BEST, YEAH?
HIP, HIP, HOORAY!
I'M ALREADY STARTING TO REGRET THIS...
I'LL SUPPORT YOU!
OKAY.
GOT IT!

HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO HOLD MY HAND? YOU'RE SO STRANGE.
IN THIS SITUATION, IF I WERE A BEAUTIFUL CAREER WOMAN INSTEAD OF MYSELF...
I'D WANT TO ROOT FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIP!
THAT AGAIN?
HEH.
HA HA!
SHIMIZU-SAN.
HNGH...!
IF THIS WERE A FAN ZINE, WE WOULD REALIZE OUR FEELINGS FOR EACH OTHER AND BECOME ONE! HOW ROMANTIC!

HUH?
LEAN
LEAN
THUMP
PLEASE...
WH-
WHAT?!
BE
MY...
FIRST...

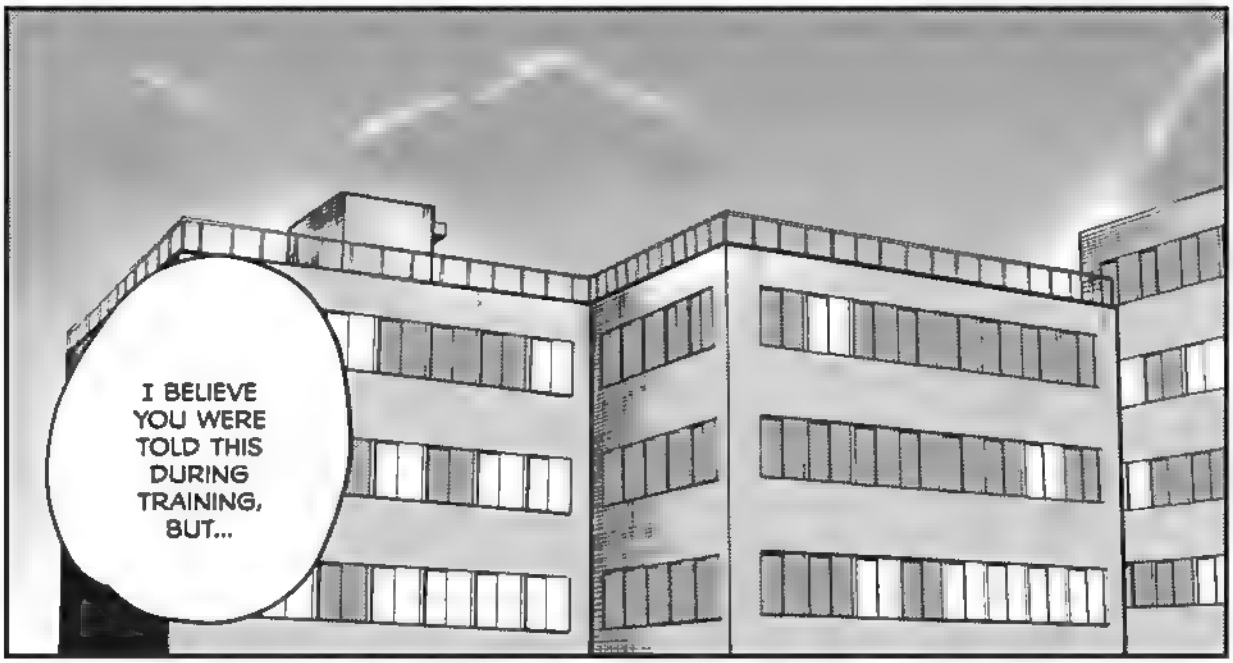


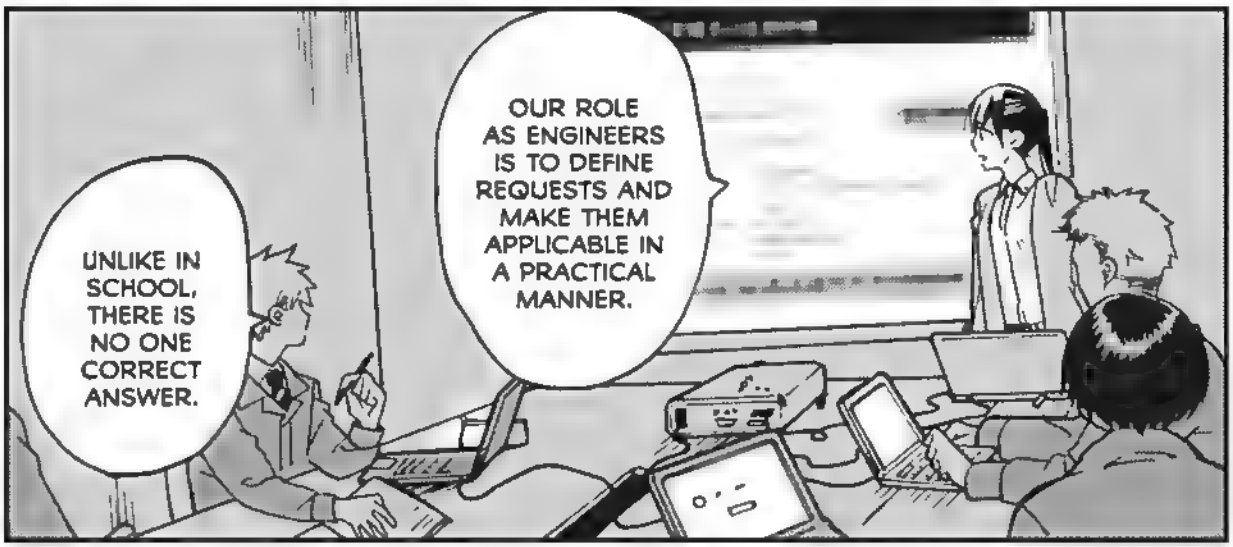
NOTHING REALLY CHANGES JUST BECAUSE WE'RE BOTH WOMEN.
SHOCK
JUST KIDDING!
THERE'S NO NEED TO OVERREACT. IT WAS JUST A KISS!
HA HA HA
SLIDE
RIGHT?
I DEFINITELY...

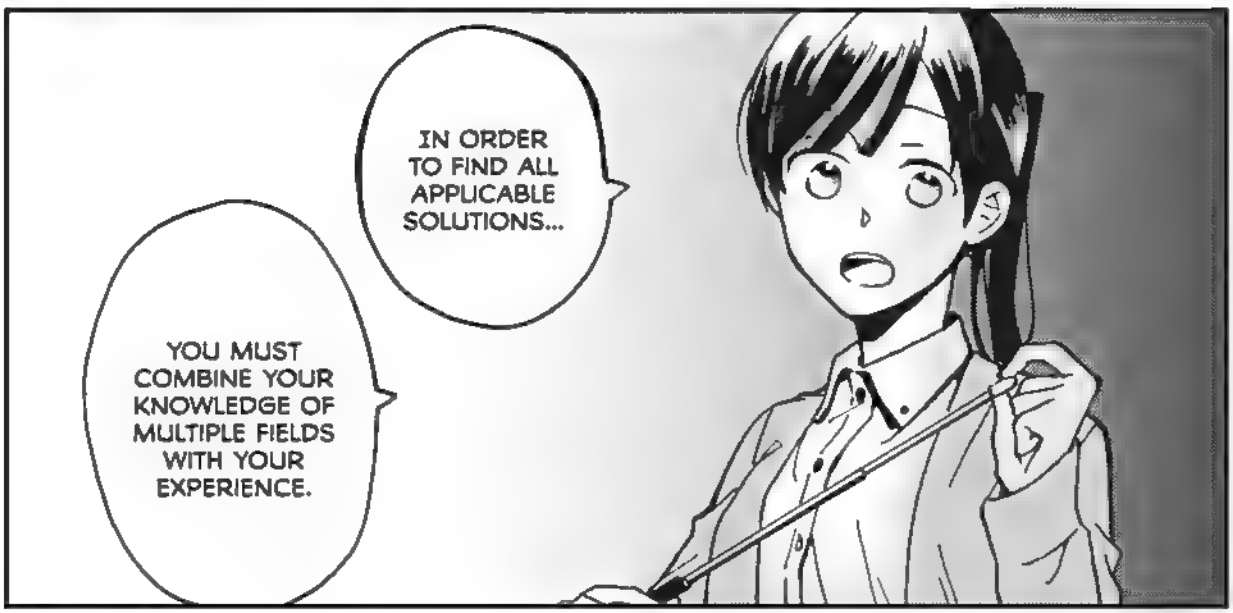


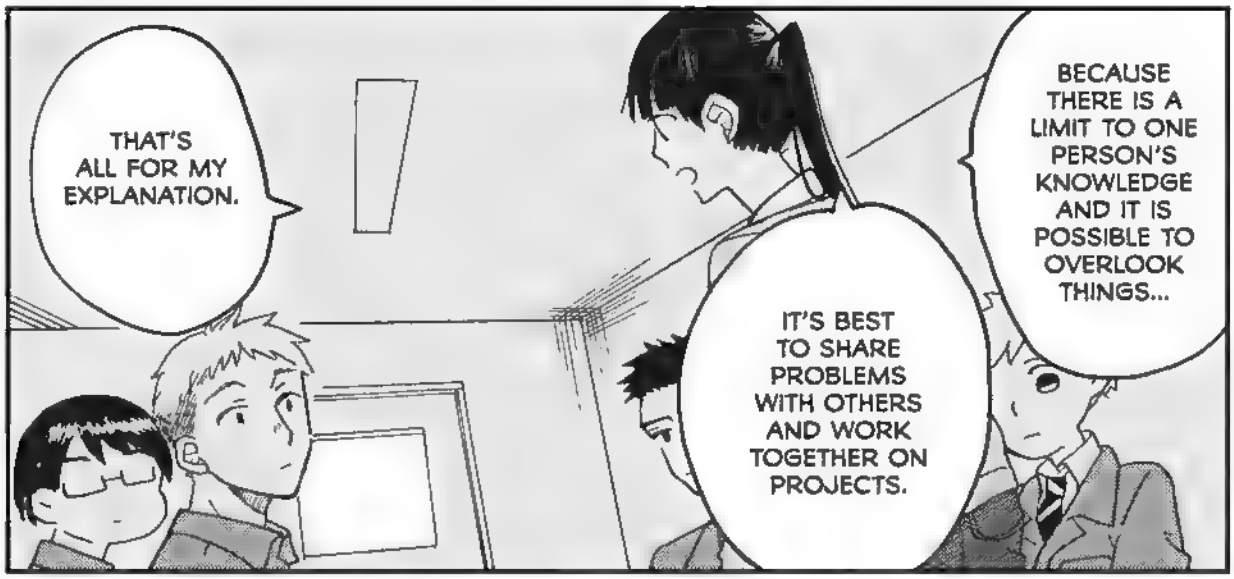
Still Sick (1) The End

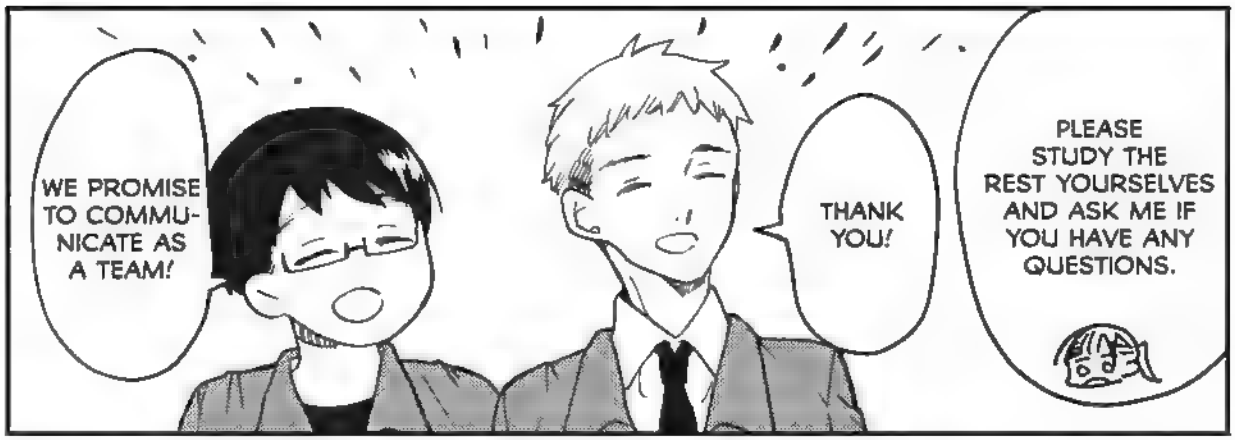
THE NEXT CHAPTER WAS SPECIALLY DRAWN FOR THIS VOLUME!
IT TAKES PLACE BETWEEN CHAPTERS 5 AND 6...
AFTER SHIMIZU-SAN FORCES HER WAY INTO MY APARTMENT ASKING ME TO TEACH HER HOW TO DRAW COMICS.
IS THAT WHAT HAP-PENED?


I BELIEVE YOU WERE TOLD THIS DURING TRAINING, BUT...


UNLIKE IN SCHOOL, THERE IS NO ONE CORRECT ANSWER.
OUR ROLE AS ENGINEERS IS TO DEFINE REQUESTS AND MAKE THEM APPLICABLE IN A PRACTICAL MANNER.


YOU MUST COMBINE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF MULTIPLE FIELDS WITH YOUR EXPERIENCE.
IN ORDER TO FIND ALL APPLICABLE SOLUTIONS...


THAT'S ALL FOR MY EXPLANATION.
IT'S BEST TO SHARE PROBLEMS WITH OTHERS AND WORK TOGETHER ON PROJECTS.
BECAUSE THERE IS A LIMIT TO ONE PERSON'S KNOWLEDGE AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO OVERLOOK THINGS...


WE PROMISE TO COMMUNICATE AS A TEAM!
THANK YOU!
PLEASE STUDY THE REST YOURSELVES AND ASK ME IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.

SIGH
ISN'T THAT A PERSONAL PROBLEM?
HUH? BUT THAT'S...
BY THE WAY, I'M PERSONALLY CONCERNED ABOUT COMMUNICATION WITH MAEKAWA FROM GENERAL AFFAIRS.

*CHAPTERS 3 AND 4
DIDN'T YOU TWO GO OUT TOGETHER EARLIER?
YOU SEEM TO GET ALONG WELL ENOUGH.
THAT WAS WHEN ALL OUR PROBLEMS STARTED.
I STOPPED DOING THAT.
WAH!
SHIMIZU-SAN!
AN IMAGE FROM THE PAST
MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE YOU RUN AWAY.
I KNEW SHE WASN'T JUST A DITZY PRETTY GIRL...
FROSTY ATTITUDE
*CHAPTER 5
TO BE HONEST, I'M NOT SURE HOW TO ACT AROUND HER.
WE KIND OF MADE UP, BUT...
WE CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON HER AS A LEADER, BUT IF IT'S NOT FOR WORK SHE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH OTHERS!
SHIMIZU-SAN...!
BUT I DON'T HAVE A LOT OF GIRL FRIENDS, SO I WANT TO GET ALONG WITH HER!

THANKS, EVERYONE.
SHINE
I DON'T KNOW THAT WE CAN DO MUCH, BUT WE'LL SUPPORT YOU!
I'M WORRIED IT'LL JUST BE A BOTHER TO MAEKAWA, THOUGH...
LET'S TALK THIS PROBLEM OUT.
I UNDERSTAND.
YOU GUYS ARE SO SERIOUS.
HUH?
OH, NO...
I JUST WANT TO BE NORMAL FRIENDS WITH HER.
FIRST, WE MUST DEFINE THE MEANING OF "GETTING ALONG" WITH MAEKAWA.
LET'S START BY SETTING A GOAL FOR A DEGREE OF PROXIMITY TO HER.
GASP
MAEKAWA!
WHAT'S WITH THAT POSE?
ARE YOU STILL IN YOUR MEETING?
I'M JUST, UM, TRAINING THE NEW RECRUITS!
CHATTER
CHATTER

WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I'M JUST MAKING ROUNDS.
POOR THING.
HAVING TO WORK OVERTIME ON "NO OVERTIME" DAY...
WEDNESDAYS ARE "NO OVERTIME" DAYS.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY EMERGENCY WORK TO TAKE CARE OF, PLEASE GO HOME.
MEETING ROOM
FLAP
FLAP
H-HEY!
WHAT'S WITH THAT?
PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO RETURN THE MEETING ROOM KEY, AS WELL!
YES?
TIME OUT
COULD YOU WAIT A BIT, PLEASE?
UH...
MAEKAWA-SAN!

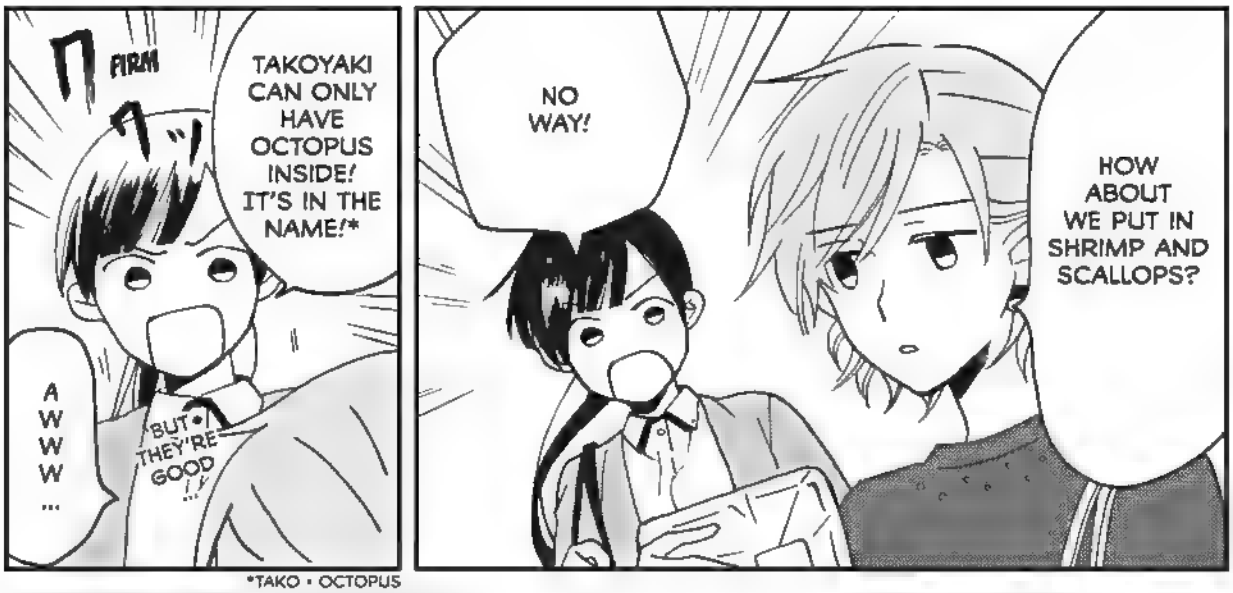
OUR BOSS IS FIDGETING!
SERIOUSLY?!
UM, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE I SHOULD TAKE HER!
HOW ABOUT EATING AT YOUR PLACE?
SLAM
YOU SHOULD INVITE HER TO DINNER!
WHAT?
LET ME THINK...
OH, I KNOW!
I GOT "THAT" AT LAST YEAR'S BINGO TOURNAMENT AND STILL HAVEN'T USED IT...
CHATTER
CHATTER
THAT'S A GREAT IDEA!
BUT SHE MIGHT TURN ME DOWN...
GO WITH THAT!
BE BRAVE!
I WISHED THEY'D HURRY UP...
は
SIGH

SLAM
OH?
OUR BOSS WOULD LIKE TO TALK WITH YOU!
ガチャ
KER-CHAK
MAEKAWA-SAN.
I FEEL LIKE THIS HAS HAPPENED BEFORE, BACK IN SCHOOL...
WHISTLE WHISTLE
I LIKE YOU!
NO WAY.
IT'S SHIMIZU-SAN, AFTER ALL.
CHATTER
CHATTER
GO AHEAD, BOSS.
DON'T WORRY. WE'LL COVER OUR ears.
FIDGET
IT'S EMBARRASSING TO SAY IN FRONT OF EVERYONE...
FIDGET
UM... WOULD YOU...
YES?
MAEKAWA!

WOULD YOU...
LIKE TO HAVE A TAKOYAKI PARTY WITH ME?!
I THINK WE HAVE SOME THINGS TO TALK ABOUT, SO SURE.
BEAM
TAKOYAKI PARTY
SHIMIZU-SAN... JUST WHAT ARE YOU TEACHING THE NEW RECRUITS?
CAW
CAW
WOOHOO!
WISHING YOU THE BEST OF LUCK!
YAY!
SHE SAID SHE'D COME!
THANKS, EVERYONE!
CONGRATULA-TIONS!

YOU'RE NOT A STUDENT WHO NEEDS HELP ASKING OUT HER CRUSH ANYMORE.
ALTHOUGH I DID WONDER...
SORRY!
GREAT PRICE!
SALE!
FISH
FISH
FISH
PLEASE DON'T INVOLVE OTHERS FROM WORK IN YOUR PRIVATE PROBLEMS.
I'VE NEVER REALLY WANTED TO GET CLOSE TO OTHER GIRLS BEFORE.
I JUST DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO CLOSE THE DISTANCE.
YOU SHOULD HAVE JUST ASKED ME INSTEAD OF GETTING OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED.
O-OH.
OKAY.

I DON'T HAVE TO PUT ON A FACADE, SO YOU'RE EASY TO BE AROUND.
IT'S NOT LIKE I HATE SPENDING TIME WITH YOU, SHIMIZU-SAN.
TOSS
TOSS
WE DON'T NEED THAT MUCH.
THAT'S GREAT!
WE CAN PLAY A GAME AND THE LOSER HAS TO EAT ONE!
IT'S BORING JUST TO MAKE NORMAL ONES!
WE DON'T NEED TO PLAY A GAME.
LET'S MAKE SUPER SPICY TAKOYAKI!
I'M NOT GOING TO EAT THEM.


FIRM
TAKOYAKI CAN ONLY HAVE OCTOPUS INSIDE! IT'S IN THE NAME!*
AWWW...
BUT THEY'RE GOOD!!
NO WAY!
HOW ABOUT WE PUT IN SHRIMP AND SCALLOPS?

*TAKO • OCTOPUS

YOU SEEM LIKE THE TYPE TO EAT ANYTHING.
I AM.
UNTIL NOW, WE'VE ONLY EVER TALKED ABOUT MANGA TOGETHER. THIS CHANGE OF PACE IS SO REFRESHING!

TUG
うぅ〜
I'M OLDER, SO I'LL HOLD IT.
WHY DOES AGE MATTER?
CUT IT OUT, OR PEOPLE WILL THINK WE'RE NEWLYWEDS!
NO, THEY WON'T.
LET'S HEAD TO MY PLACE.
I'LL CARRY THE BAG!
VROOM
WE SPENT A LOT OF TIME SHOPPING.
BECAUSE WE FOUGHT OVER EVERY SINGLE INGREDIENT...
OH A CAR
WELL, THAT'S MORE FUN.
YOU THINK SO?

I'M GLAD YOU GAVE ME YOUR HONEST OPINIONS!
OH?
IT'S THE SAME WAY WITH WORK.
BY PITTING OUR OPINIONS AGAINST EACH OTHER, WE'RE ABLE TO COME UP WITH NEW IDEAS.
ALTHOUGH IF THERE'S NO RESPECT, THAT JUST STARTS FIGHTS...
I PREFERRED IT MORE WHEN YOU LOOKED SCARED EVERY TIME I MADE EYE CONTACT WITH YOU.
IT'S TOO BAD.
MAEKAWA...?
IT'S SO UGLY!
I MADE IT IN HOME EC.
YOU EVEN ADDED YOUR INITIALS!
M.S
YOU CAN USE THIS APRON.
LET'S GET COOKING!

TA-DA
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE NEEDED AN ENTIRE OCTOPUS?
I WANTED TO SEE YOU TAKE IT APART WITH FORCE...
M.S
WANNA GO AHEAD AND TAKE CARE OF THAT?
CHOP
CHOP
MAEKAWA, ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T HATE ME...?
TIME TO CUT YOU INTO LITTLE PIECES, MAKOTO-SAN!
WHY ARE YOU NAMING IT AFTER ME?!
POUT
DOESN'T IT KIND OF LOOK LIKE YOU?
THEN I GUESS I'LL CALL IT MAKOTO-SAN.

THE TAKOYAKI PAN IS READY TO GO, TOO! I WON IT AT THE BINGO TOURNAMENT.
GOOD FOR YOU.
YAKI SAUCE
120g
YOU CAN STOP THAT NOW...
MAKOTO-SAN IS READY TO GO.
EXCITED
POKE
THEY'RE NOT DONE YET.
SIZZLE
CAN I MAKE THE SPICY ONES?
JUST REMEMBER THAT YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN HALF A YEAR SINCE WE STARTED TALKING.
WE HAVEN'T KNOWN EACH OTHER LONG ENOUGH FOR THAT.
WHY DON'T WE TALK ABOUT OUR MEMORIES TOGETHER WHILE THEY COOK?

YEAH?
I STILL DON'T GET WHY YOU...
CAME TO THE CONVEN-TION JUST TO SEE ME.
MAEKAWA, YOU...
...IT'S BECAUSE AT FIRST, I THOUGHT YOU'D ACCEPT ANYTHING I THREW YOUR WAY.
WHEN YOU SAY "AT FIRST", WHEN WAS THAT?
FORGET ABOUT IT.
BUT IF I HAVE TO...
HMM...
AH.
COME AT ME!
YOU CAN ASK ME A QUESTION NEXT!
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING I WANT TO ASK YOU.

WOW.
MY PARENTS OFTEN YELLED AT ME AND TRIED TO GET ME TO CHANGE, THOUGH.
THAT'S PROBABLY MY OLDER BROTHER'S INFLUENCE.
SOMETIMES YOU ACT AND SPEAK LIKE A TOMBOY.
OH.
EVEN YOU HAD A REBELLIOUS PHASE, HUH?
I KEPT TALKING THAT WAY TO REBEL, BUT IT BECAME A BAD HABIT I NEVER FIXED.
I SEE.
OH, BUT I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN YOU SAY "YOU, YOU" AND AVOID CALLING ME BY MY NAME.
SHOULD I FIX IT?
I THINK AFTER ALL THIS TIME IT WOULD JUST BE WEIRD.

O-
OKAY!
YOUR NAME? GOT IT.
I'D PREFER YOU CALLING ME BY MY NAME INSTEAD.
A... AKANE-SA-
SORRY, I MEANT MY LAST NAME.
AH, YOU'RE DOING IT AGAIN.
EVEN THOUGH YOU NAMED AN OCTOPUS AFTER ME!
TOSS
TOSS
YOU CAN EAT ALL OF THE SPICY ONES BY YOURSELF.
WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT? IT'S LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO EMBARRASS ME!

LET'S DO THIS AGAIN SOME TIME!
I'M STUFFED.
I'VE HAD ENOUGH TAKOYAKI FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.
CLACK
THANKS FOR TODAY!
SEE YOU TOMORROW!
GOOD NIGHT!
...GOOD NIGHT.

SILENT
I'M EX-HAUSTED.
BOSS!
I'M GOING TO TAKE A SHOWER AND SLEEP!
SLAM
GASP

SHOVE
PLAN
THANKS, GUYS, BUT PLEASE POUR ALL THAT ENERGY INTO YOUR WORK!
WE SUGGEST VISITING A THEME PARK TOGETHER OVER SUMMER BREAK!
WE CAME UP WITH A PLAN TO HELP YOU AND MAEKAWA GET CLOSER!
*THE SOUND OF THE SHREDDER
CRUNCH
MAEKAWA, THIS IS–
NO THANK YOU~!
WHEEEE
GASP

THANK YOU FOR READING VOLUME ONE OF STILL SICK!

AKASHI

THANKS TO...

EVERYONE WHO READ THIS VOLUME, EVERYONE WHO TOLD ME ABOUT THEIR JOBS, EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED ME ON PIXIV AND TWITTER, MY EDITOR, KOKUBA-SAMA, AND EVERYONE ELSE INVOLVED IN THE CREATION OF THIS COMIC!

KONOHANA KITAN

TOKYOPOP

WWW.TOKYOPOP.COM

© AMANO SAKUYA, GENTOSHA COMICS

PRICE $12.99

Futaribeya
A ROOM FOR TWO

It's Sakurako Kawawa's first day of high school, and the day she meets her new roommate – the incredibly gorgeous Kasumi Yamabuki!

Follow the heartwarming, hilarious daily life of two high school roommates in this new, four-panel-style comic!

TOKYOPOP

WWW.TOKYOPOP.COM

© YUKIKO, GENTOSHA COMICS INC.

PRICE: $12.99

ARIA The MASTERPIECE

- ☆ DELUXE, REMASTERED 2-IN-1 EDITION
- ☆ GORGEOUS GOLD-FOIL COVER
- ☆ INCLUDES FULL-COLOR ILLUSTRATIONS

EXPERIENCE THE WORLD OF AQUA LIKE NEVER BEFORE!

© KOZUE AMANO / MAG Garden

TOKYOPOP

BREATH OF FLOWERS

IN THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS, EVERY BLOSSOM IS UNIQUE

TOKYOPOP INTERNATIONAL WOMEN MANGA

Girls Love / LGBTQ+

© CALY, PIKA EDITION – Editions H2T

DEEP Scar

SCARS CAN TELL A STORY. BUT LOVE'S SCARS RUN DEEP...

Deep Scar Volume 1
AVAILABLE NOW!

TOKYOPOP
INTERNATIONAL women of manga

© ROSSELLA SERGI 2018, PIKA EDITION – Editions H2T. All rights reserved.

YURI BEAR STORM

BEARS ARE THE BEGINNING AND THE END...

BUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A BEAR PRINCESS FALLS IN LOVE WITH A HUMAN GIRL?

TOKYOPOP

© IKUNIGOMAKINAKO, MORISHIMA AKIKO, GENTOSHA COMICS INC.
© Ikunigomamonaka/Yurikumanikuru

Scarlet Soul

Long ago, an ancient hero sealed away the underworld. Now, with that sacred barrier broken, it's up to Rin and the mysterious demon Aghyr to restore balance to the Kingdom of Nohmur!

TOKYOPOP INTERNATIONAL WOMEN of MANGA

© KIRA YUKISHIRO 2018, PIKA EDITION – Editions H2T. All rights reserved.

STOP

THIS IS THE BACK OF THE BOOK!

How do you read manga-style? It's simple! Let's practice -- just start in the top right panel and follow the numbers below!

Crimson from ***Kamo*** / Fairy Cat from ***Grimms Manga Tales***
Morrey from ***Goldfisch*** / Princess Al from ***Princess Al***